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THE
RED BOOK
MAGAZINE



"LOVE RIDES TO WIN"

Read "The Society End" in this issue

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THE RED BOOK

MAGAZINE

EDITED BY KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN

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To accompany "The Society End," page 85.

Painted by Edmund Frederick

Otto Sarony Co., New York
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PHOTOGRAPHIC ART STUDIES

Portraits of twenty-eight American actresses who, among hosts of others, will preside over booths at the Actor's Fund Fair to be held in New York City, beginning May ninth.

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The
Actors'
Fund Fair
New York City

Week of May 9th, 1910

Actuated by that spirit of human charity which, from the beginning of the Theatre, has ever characterized the followers of Thespis' cart, the twenty-eight gracious women whose portraits follow, among hosts of others of our Stage, will preside over the various booths of the Actors' Fund Fair to be held in New York City during the week of May ninth, to the end that the riches of the Fund may be increased, and its beneficiaries, in their declining years and their days of stress, may not be without those comforts to which they are so justly entitled. We owe much to our friends the Players, those men and women whose lives are dedicated to our entertainment and enlightenment, and though in the words of their Poet—they be but the "abstract and brief chronicles of the times," the times without them would be dull indeed.



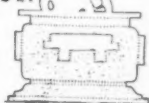
MISS VIOLA ALLEN
In charge of Shakespeare Booth
Photograph by Sarony, New York



MISS MAUDE ADAMS

Will present a play in theatre especially
built for the Fair by Charles Frohman

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MISS MARGARET ANGLIN
In charge of Canadian Booth
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Will present a play in the Fair theatre
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MISS CHARLOTTE WALKER
In charge of Southern Booth
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MISS MAXINE ELLIOTT
In charge of Yacht Booth
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MISS BLANCHE BATES
In charge of the California Booth
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Patroness of Art-Room
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In charge of "Frocks and Frills" Booth
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In charge of the Chorus Lady Booth
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In charge of "The Sweets" Booth
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In charge of Photograph Booth
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In charge of Russian Booth
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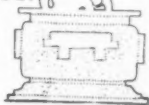




MISS ANNIE RUSSELL
In charge of Humor Booth
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In charge of Motto Booth
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MISS HATTIE WILLIAMS
In charge of the New England Booth
Photograph by Bangs, New York



We waxed confidential over our tea and salad

To accompany "The 'Society End',"—page 85

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

Vol. XV. May 1910 No. 1

The Undertow

BY JAMES OPPENHEIM

Author of the Dr. Rast Stories

ILLUSTRATED BY H. J. MOWAT

OVERHEAD flamed a big gas-sign:

* * * * *

* GROGAN HOUSE *

* 10c A NIGHT. *

* * * * *

Beneath it, on the pavement of the Bowery, stood five doctors, two policemen, and a few curious night-farers. The time was two in the morning; the air had the sweet sad poignancy of an Autumn night; the broad electric-lit avenue up and down was empty, hushed, vast. The group stood quietly talking like prowlers in the night.

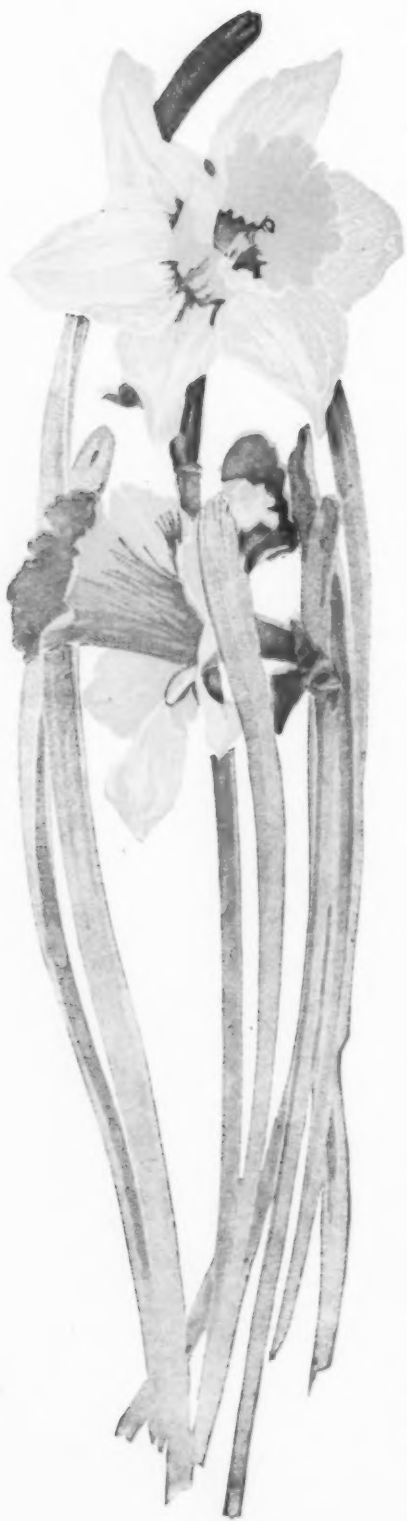
"Soft now!" said one of the policemen.

He led the way up dim-lit, dusty wooden stairs. The doctors followed. The other policeman barred out the on-lookers.

At the head of the stairs was a door. The policeman opened this sharply and suddenly, raised his club, and the doctors crowded after him. They entered a large oblong room. Benches ran around the walls; long tables were near the front; sawdust covered the floor. In the center stood a big, old-fashioned stove, unfired. A tiny naked gas-flame burned in the thick air. All these details were the setting for an odd figure. Against the far wall, behind a desk, on which glowed a Welsbach, sat a big brute reading the evening paper. He was massive as a gorilla; his face had the prize-fighter's jaw; unshaved hair made a stubble on chin and cheeks; his eyes were small and sharp under a low forehead.

As the group crowded across the empty floor, the Brute arose menacingly, got from





behind the desk, and strode toward them, fists clenched, face scowling.

"What'cher want, eh?"

His voice sounded loud and hoarse in the extreme hush and sleep of the house. The policeman raised his hand.

"Grogan," he said sarcastically, "if ye make a noise, we'll vaccinate yer. So don't ye be raisin' the house. Look-a here, I'm McPherson."

The Brute raised a big thumb, and slouched nearer.

"Put me wise," he growled. "What's the game?"

McPherson winked and jerked his head.

"These be doctors. They're after vaccinating yer honored guests."

"What fer?"

"To earn their livin', sure. Besides, there's a small-pox scare, and the Health people has got it." He raised his hand again. "Don't get nervous. They're scratching the arms of every lodging-house on the Bowery. There's a hundred doctors out, and the city has sent 'em."

A tall bearded doctor stepped up, and drew out a slip of paper:

"Here is the order. Everything must be done at once and quietly. No man must escape. If any does, you will be held, Mr. Grogan. Answer these questions:

"How many men are there?"

Grogan's voice was very ugly. "A hundred—more or less."

"Where are they?"

"Sleepin'."

"Where?"

"Upstairs."

"Now listen! Bolt the doors, close the windows, then lead the way. You must help us get the men down here. Light up."

Grogan shrugged his shoulders, and gave a short laugh.

"Do as you want. And if my pretty gentlemen give yer somethin' ye didn't expect, why, it's free, doc, it's free."

Then cursing under his breath, the Brute followed orders. Doors and windows were locked; the gas-jets over the tables set a-

flame. Then Grogan led the way. He carried a gas-lighter, the little flame blowing with his motion as he crept up the back stairs with the group at his heels. The tiny flame threw strange shadows over the silent, expectant faces, lighting here an eye, there a bearded chin.

They came out on a floor arranged like a seaside bathing-house. There were two long corridors, either side of which were low, narrow stalls, with unlocked doors. The human smell was overpowering; the noise of snoring was shriller than crickets; as they stood a moment, while Grogan lit a gas-jet at the end of each corridor, they heard a man cry out in his sleep—a cry for help from the deeps.

"This is a queer business," whispered one of the doctors.

What had at first seemed a huge practical joke became unearthly. The hundred lay unconscious, sunk into the mystery of sleep, swept far out into the processes of the stars; they could not dream of being jerked back to be vaccinated.

But there could be no turning back. What had been set in motion had to run on to a close. The seven men divided into two groups, and suddenly, in the snoring silence the Brute began pounding and pounding. The knocks re-echoed. There was a stir, crying out, low curses, questions.

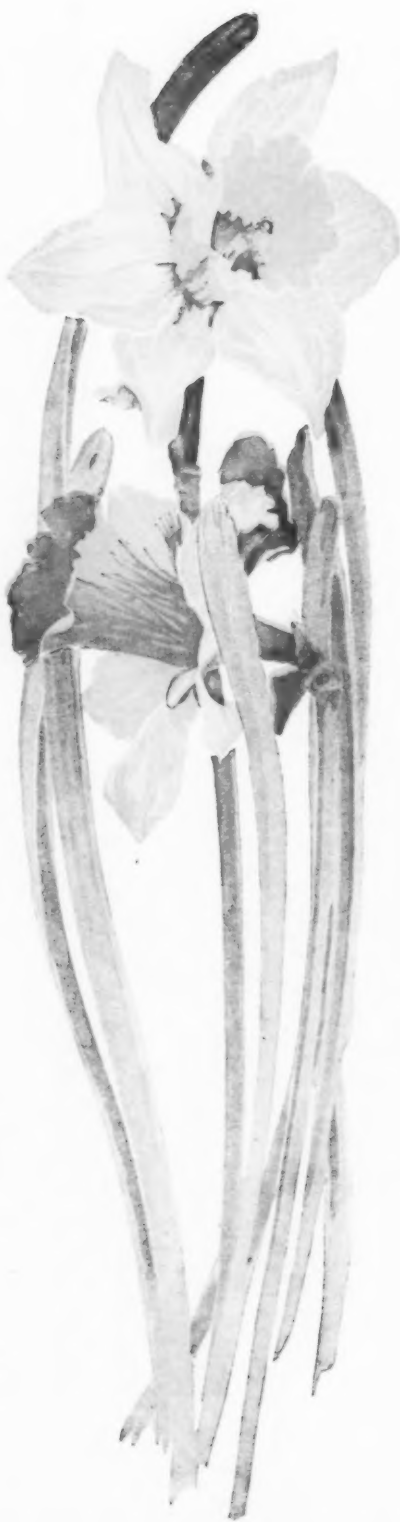
"Get up!" roared the Brute. "Get up!"

He pushed in a door, two doctors with him. In the dim light three human forms lay like dead lumps one above the other, three layers, three shelves. The Brute grasped a naked leg and pulled. A man tumbled to the floor. The man roared out incoherently.

"You lobster," cried the Brute. "Get on yer feet; get downstairs! Quick, or I'll push yer nose in!"

A wild chaos followed: room after room was sacked of its human animals. Men rushed into the corridors only to find themselves jammed in a bewildered cursing throng. Above all rose the roaring of the Brute. Some of the men were punched into





wakefulness; many were thrown out bodily. A cry of fire arose, against which the Brute and the doctors threw themselves till their throats were hoarse.

And then suddenly at the staircase the policeman gave way, and the mob poured pell-mell down and down, a cataract of human beings, sprawling over the main floor, blinking in the bright light, rushing for the exits. They shook the locked door in a frenzy. There were a hundred men, caught, trapped, wild to escape from the Unknown.

Through that wild whirlpool of faces and hands moved the Brute and the policeman, striking right and left.

Then swiftly arose the voice of the tall doctor, commanding, piercing, sure.

"Silence! Silence at once! Men, stand about the walls. *Every man bare his left arm!*"

All paused; all turned to see the speaker.

In the silence that followed one could get a glimpse of the strange crowd. Many were fully dressed; some were in trousers and shirts; a few were in their underclothes; one or two were wrapped in their blankets. But they were unlike any other gathering of men. There was something of the wild animal about them. Unkempt, misfit clothes; unshaved faces; bloodshot eyes; frowzled hair—creatures dusted up with remote roads; slaves of the Weather; haunters of the Street. Here was crime, vagrancy, beggary. Here was the human waste—the useless beings, the surplus. And though here and there lifted the strong face of the unfortunate, the unemployed, the stranger in the city, yet, all in all, here was bared the fatal undertow of civilization, the muddy buried waters down in the sewerage, the peril of the city. How had these human beings come to this pass? Who had wrought them thus? In that ordered life, which is Birth, Labor, Marriage, Children, Death, how had these been tossed into a life apart—life of the man outside the lighted window, the wandering foam swept uselessly toward extinction?



The group stood quietly talking like prowlers in the night



Yet, though outside, they were bound by terrible ties to those inside. Ties of fear, ties of poison. Yonder man was a burglar; yonder creature was drugged. They scattered a blight as they went. The city knew this, and was now vaccinating the Undertow!

But the Undertow did not know. Used to the whip, they crouched sullenly in the shadows. Silence fell upon the room, and like frightened children the men trudged to the walls, leaned back suspiciously, slowly rolled up their sleeves, and muttered and cursed under their breath.

The doctors took their positions at the tables and placed their needles and serum before them; the policeman and the Brute looked on carelessly; and then the queer business began.

Man after man came up; his arm was rapidly scratched; the blood showed; and he disappeared in the shadows. The quick, neat doctors, working on these creatures under the blazing lights, showed strangely in that place. Some of the men cried out with fear, and had to be held as they struggled. Some cursed aloud. But most of them were stupid, used to blows. They had been dragged out of sleep for a needle-scratch. They did not understand.

But there was one young man somewhat different from the rest. He was of middle height and splendidly built. He had a big, smooth body, a huge round neck, a large head. His face was the oiled tan of the outdoor man, his lips large, his eyes a soft and liquid brown. His abundance of brown hair was slightly gold. His bare arm was a pleasure to behold. It was like a blacksmith's—mighty, sinewy, smooth-skinned and perfectly browned.

He stood close to a busy doctor—a tall, dark, handsome Jew; beardless, young, sympathetic, alert.

This doctor cried:

"Next."

The young man stepped up. His arm was seized firmly; he set his lips; and then, scratch, scratch, the sharp pang bit back to

his heart and brain. He did not wince. The doctor seemed to notice the unusual arm. He looked up at the face. There was a moment's pause; then the arm was dropped suddenly, and the doctor spoke in a quick, low, amazed voice:

"Ribin! Michael Ribin!"

The young man started slightly.

"Well," he muttered, "what of it?"

"Don't you know me?" said the other softly. "I'm—Dr. Rast."

Michael looked at him. His face seemed to struggle, his lips quivered. Then suddenly his forehead darkened with rebellion.

"All right," he said. "Are you done?"

Doctor Rast seized his arm, and spoke tenderly.

"Michael—wait till I'm finished. I want you to come home for breakfast."

"No, you don't," Michael cried harshly, but again his lips quivered, his face softened.

The Doctor smiled.

"I'm not going to preach, Michael. Wait over there."

The tenderness, the brotherliness of the big man seemed to reach out to the lonely vagrant. One can resist much—hate, homelessness, the weather, hunger—one cannot resist love. Suddenly Michael turned away.

Half an hour later the two were walking through the deserted streets. It was a wild Autumn morning. Dawn blew over the roofs with streamers of derelict clouds. Gusts of sharp rain beat in their faces. Afar off they could almost feel the open country—pastures run wild, with goldenrod and aster, thistle and sumach; they could almost hear the forests wailing as they were stripped of the reddened leaves.

So they walked in silence, down Canal Street to Seward Park, over the Park to East Broadway, and down that red-brick remote East Side avenue to the little flat. They stepped into the hall. Doctor Rast opened the door of his office with a key.

"Softly," he whispered, "they're sleeping."

A small light glowed warm in the little





office. A deep brooding sense of home suffused the room—a mood of sweetness and silence, touched tender with human sleep. Outside the wind wailed, the dawn whitened; a wild glimmering shuddered at the two windows. Michael gave a great sigh, almost a sob.

Suddenly the big Doctor seized the boy.

"Michael," he murmured, "you're good to come to us. Sit down—ease up—be at home." He looked about the room. "Yes, *home*."

He shoved Michael into a deep chair, that sank beneath the boy, embracing him in softness. A wonderful feeling of security, of comfort, of shelter went through him. He sighed again.

Doctor Rast took off his coat, tiptoed to the inner room to reassure himself, came back, turned up the light and sat down in the revolving chair. Then slowly he lit his pipe.

"Smoke?"

"Not now," gulped Michael.

There was a silence. The Doctor was thoroughly tired, but his face was good to look upon—calm, tender, masculine. He leaned forward a little.

"What business were you in, Michael—*before*—"

Michael spoke with a touch of sarcasm.

"Steam-fittin'—only it aint a business—it's *slavin'*!"

The Doctor puffed slowly.

"It's hard man's work, isn't it?"

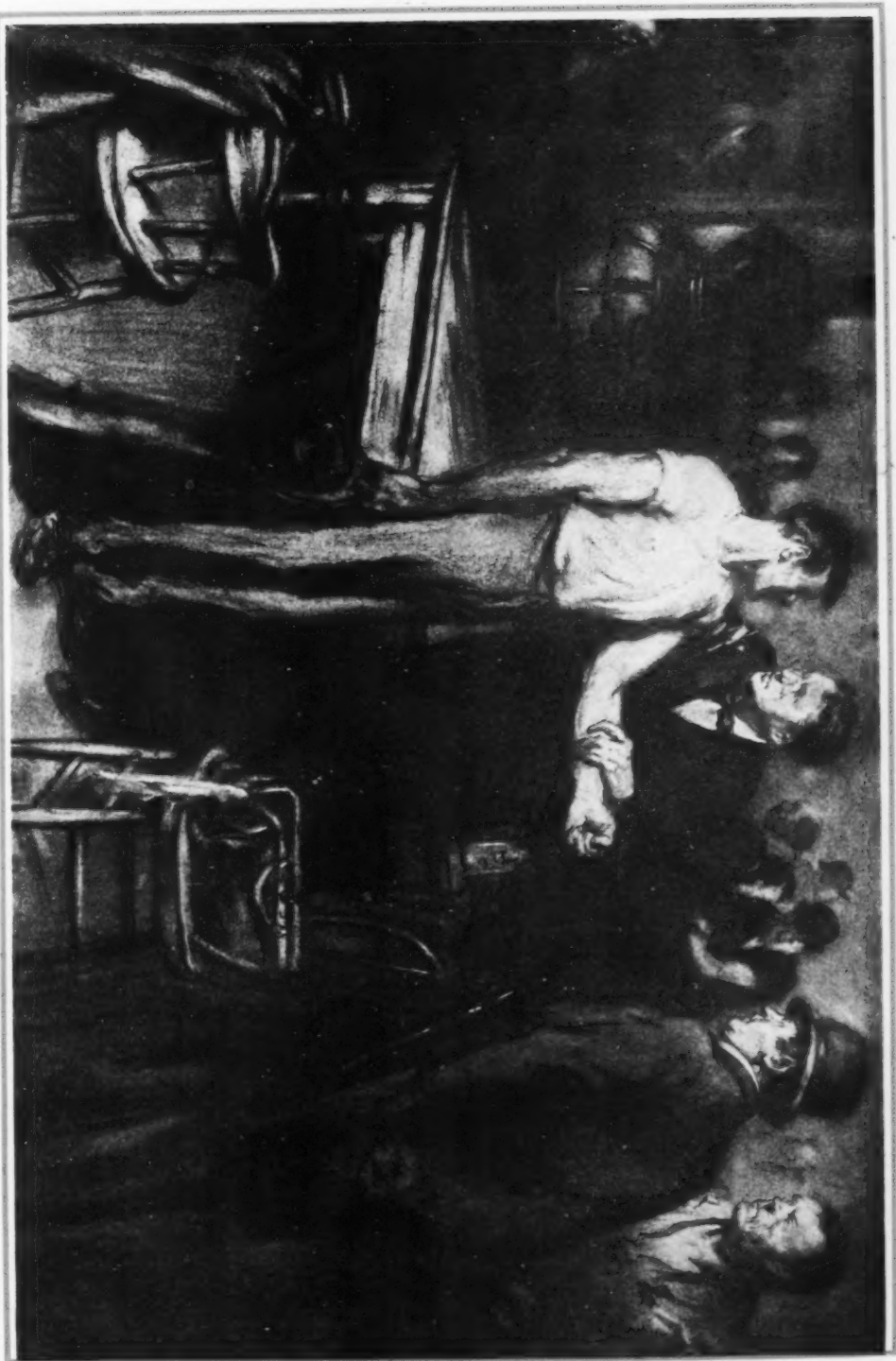
"Well," said Michael, "there aint any fakin' about it. When you take a-hold of a 280-pound radiator, you've got to *lift*. You've got to have the *beef*."

The Doctor leaned forward, and spoke with a thrilling voice of praise.

"And you've got *that*, Michael. My! I had to look up at your face when I scratched that arm! Let me see it!"

Michael's face lit up; his pride had been touched off. Grandly he rolled up his sleeve, swelled his biceps, swung his fist.

"It's the beef," he cried. "How's that, eh?"



He looked up at the face



There was a slight pause again. Then the Doctor spoke slowly.

"Steam-fitting is dangerous, too, isn't it?"

"Well, I guess," muttered Michael. "I've gotten lumps up me back two inches thick from luggin' cast-iron. Every other week we'd send a man to the hospital—strains and the like. The weight kills a man. The pay is rotten."

The Doctor spoke suddenly, yet softly.

"How was it, Michael, that you ran off?"

Michael spoke sarcastically.

"How? That's an easy one!" He waved his hands. "I was out of work, wasn't I? Not a job in town—nothing—hard-times. That was Spring a year ago. I sat around at home, didn't I? My gal had to go out and take in washin', didn't she? Great for a man to sit aroun' and watch his wife breakin' her back! Home was hell—" His voice deepened harshly. "*Home was hell!*"

"You quarreled with your wife?" whispered the Doctor.

"She quarreled with me. She blamed me for everything. I couldn't stand it any longer. One night I was for killin' myself. But Spring was in the air—it was early in April. I was born in the country, you know. I couldn't stand it. I lit out. I told the gal that I was goin' out of town to get a job. So I lit out. I had a couple-a dollars with me."

"And then—?"

"I tramped from town to town. I tried to get work. I couldn't. My money was all gone. One day I walked through an orchard. I see a woman feeding chickens in a farmyard. I was that hungry I could-a eat the chicken feed. Well, I laid down in the grass. I wanted to eat—and that badly, and right off. I couldn't stand it. But I was that ashamed to ask for food I lay there close to an hour. Then I smelt the victuals of the kitchen. I said to myself, 'This once I've got to ask. I can't starve.' I got up, an' crept to the kitchen door. My face was hot, my heart plugged up. There was natural steam-heat on my forehead. I had never before asked for nothing in my life. The lady

came to the door. She asked what I wanted. I said I was hungry. Then she gave me a good dinner." He gulped strangely. "That's how I came to be a tramp."

"That made you a tramp?"

"Yes, that woman. For I said to myself, 'If it's as easy as that to get food in this world, I'll never work another hour in my life.'"

"And then—?"

"A world slid off my shoulders. It was like droppin' the iron-ring of a boiler after luggin' it into a cellar. I tried to forget the job. I forgot my gal, and New York, and the job. I didn't care. The world had no use for me," he spoke bitterly, "so I had no use for the world."

The Doctor looked at the boy curiously.

"And you've been tramping about over a year?"

"Tramping, tramping—inching it over the country, footin' it along the roads, ridin' in freight-trains, sleepin' in barns."

"And in the winter?"

Michael smiled.

"South in the winter."

"And you liked it?"

"Yes."

"I can't understand," said the Doctor softly, musingly, "how a man can like being without ties—love, home, work. Most of us are too weak to go alone. *We need each other so.* We need the wife, children, brothers—"

"*Brothers?*" said Michael. "Yes. And what if there are other brothers—not people?"

"What other brothers?"

"Well," Michael was embarrassed, he was ashamed and choked up. Finally he blurted, "Trees, grass, animals—the weather, the stars."

The Doctor leaned very close.

"*Do you mean that, Michael?*"

"Yep! What if I do? A tramp can think and feel, too."

The Doctor arose softly, stepped over to the boy, and laid a hand on his shoulder. Michael looked up; their eyes met.





"Michael, that's why you didn't need us—but what if we need *you*?"

"Need me?" Michael's face flushed.

The Doctor reseated himself. There was a thick silence. Then the Doctor spoke softly.

"Why did you come back, Michael?"

The boy almost stuttered.

"Oh—a touch of autumn—you feel like seeing faces again, and streets—you feel like gettin' in a crowd in a saloon—and seeing the old lights in windows—"

"The home-feeling," added the Doctor.

Then Michael spoke sharply, bluntly, roused to revolt.

"But don't you think I've come to stay. None of that—*none of that!* Damn it, I'll never work again—never for no-one. I'm free. This life was a cursed slavery—it was slavin' all the time. For what? A few dollars, a stinkin' hole in a tenement, a quarreling gal. No, I've shook it all off—I've been happy. It didn't matter what happened to me, so I was glad. I could risk everythin'—sleep where I liked, eat where I liked—and loaf as much as I darned please. Nothin' worried me; and I've seen the country. I've gone laughin' by where others were sweatin' in the sun or groanin' in the mills. Life'll never get me again. There's nothin' to hold me—leastwise nothin' so strong as a hill of daisies or a night chock-full of stars. I'm calloused to it now. Don't think I've come to stay!"

The Doctor sank back in his chair, his face suddenly grown older, worn, tired. It was always thus when he felt himself failing in a fight. What could he do? What could he say? He knew the vagrant; he knew that when it comes to this stage there is nothing to be done. The man has lost his moral grip; he has flung off his responsibility. Something is gone dead within him.

"Michael," he half-groaned, "why wont you be a man?"

"I wont," said Michael bluntly.

There was a deep silence. Then Michael added slowly:

"Give me the breakfast and I'll go."



The feel of her in his arms intoxicated him



There was another silence.

"You haven't asked about your wife," murmured the Doctor softly.

"She's dead to me," said Michael.

Dawn had now brought a great light; it flooded the room; the wind was dying; the sweet gloom of Autumn hung in the air; the little office mellowed, the Welsbach glow paled; the two heads came out of the darkness, the strong faces, the revolt in the one, the defeat in the other.

And then in the inner room was heard a quaint tinkling laughter—a breath out of Eden—the lost voice of the Spring. April laughed in October.

"What's that?" asked Michael.

Doctor Rast leaned toward the sound. His face lit with a glory; his eyes shone.

"My baby," he whispered, "my little boy."

"You have a boy?" Michael stared at him.

Doctor Rast arose, went in the inner room, and knocked.

"Nell! Nell!"

A woman's voice cried:

"Come!"

The door opened. The woman's voice went on:

"Did you just get back? Morris! You must be dead! But you came just in time—look at him! He wants his daddy!"

Again the baby-laughter was heard, and with it mingled the young laughter of mother and father. A sweet babbling arose, many little fond cries, all the prattle of the nursery.

Michael listened. His heart seemed to struggle with his set lips. His eyes felt moist. Something choked him. He softly cursed and wished he hadn't come.

And then Doctor Rast came back—but not alone. He held a little nighty in his arms, from which emerged a little face and little bare feet and little fists. It was the laughing little baby.

"Michael," cried the Doctor, "get up. Say 'good-morning' to my boy."

Michael arose awkwardly. He came close.

The baby reached out a meltingly soft and fresh hand and touched the boy's cheek.

Michael felt his eyes suffused with tears. It was Autumn—home-time. The lighted windows, the crowded streets, the haunts of men—yes, and of women—were calling, calling him. His throat grew thick.

Then the Doctor reached out a free hand and drew Michael close, very close. Michael did not try to resist.

The Doctor caught his eyes, and spoke very tenderly.

"Michael, my baby was born last April—and yours was born last winter."

Michael went very pale.

"Mine?"

"Your baby, Michael—yours. A little girl."

"A little girl?" Michael tottered as if he were about to fall.

"Yes," said the Doctor, "a beautiful little girl—she has your eyes, your mouth—think how your wife suffered—*alone, no one to help her*—we had to get charity for her. And her heart broken for you. She needed you so—she wanted you so. She kept saying, 'Michael will come back—Michael will come back.' She struggled bravely—and all that time you were free, free!"

The boy's heart was torn as if by hands; in a blinding light he saw himself; he saw his wife; he saw the child that had come to him out of the infinite; he saw the lost year.

"Doctor! Doctor!"

It was lucky the Doctor had a free arm. With that he drew close the swaying boy. A head went on his shoulder, and Michael sobbed, sobbed terribly. But the little baby laughed at the "funny man."

It was not until that evening that Michael nerved himself to meet the expected accusations of his wife. It was a wonderful Autumn evening—the streets gloomy with twilight and clouds—the cheerful lamp-lights glowing out—the lighted windows calling the workmen home. One could feel the sweet thoughtfulness of the air and the fading light, brooding with old-age dreams on the run-wild Earth. It was a night for





home—for going to one's own door, entering, sitting at table with the woman and the child, and feeling the miracle of love.

Michael turned down a crowded street, clothing himself in the warmth of the people. His heart sang. His eyes were lit. Then, timidly, hesitatingly, he turned in at a mean tenement. How well he remembered the smells! How well he remembered the stains on the green wall!

He climbed the steps. He heard the Gonorowskys jabbering at the table, as of old. He heard the children of the Baums, shriller than ever. His heart beat to bursting. He panted as he reached the next landing. He stepped to the rear. He put his hand on the knob.

Then he listened.

A woman's voice was lifted—sweet, clear, words that mean nothing, save to mothers and babies. Yes, it was *her* voice.

He felt like shouting, or bursting. He waited a moment longer. Then—yes—no—yes—a child's little cry of delight!

With that, he pushed open the door.

"Mary!" he cried.

A young woman was seated at the table in the kitchen. Next to her was a little child in a high chair. The mother was feeding the baby. As Michael cried out, she dropped the spoon she held, she arose tremblingly, she became as white as a sheet.

"Michael!"

It was the cry of months and months—a cry of love and motherhood.

In a moment more they were in each other's arms.

"I knew it!" cried Mary. "I knew it! I kept tellin' people you'd come back! They wouldn't believe in you, but I, I knew you!"

"God!" cried Michael, "I'm hungry for you!"

He pressed back her head. Yes, it was the same face—the blue eyes, the sallow cheeks, the soft golden hair. The same, yet another—older, sadder, sweet. He drew her close and kissed her. The feel of her body in his arms intoxicated him.

And then he turned to the baby—



The Village Near the Venusberg

BY RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

ILLUSTRATED BY FREDERICK RICHARDSON

A SHORT mile from the foot of the Venusberg is a flourishing village, which, to the traveler innocent of its significance, may well seem a startling paradox in such a solitude of hazels and birches and misty hill-side. It is as strange as if one should come upon a faro bank in the middle of a forest. Placid tourists traveling by stage are astonished to find such modern conveniences in what may be called a mountain fastness; for the village of which I speak flourishes like a fern in a cranny of one of the many passes that lead up to the solitude of the strange hill.

Nature and Art have never been found in a juxtaposition so immediate, so startling: for in this village the mountain mists for half the day hide the dainty shops of *corsetières* more cynically skillful than any in Paris; they creep into restaurants to which a *gourmet* would travel from the ends of the earth; they settle down and condense in cellars of wine hardly less old than the hill itself—the old hill of which no traveler ever

gains more than a glimpse—rock and rainbows and innumerable leaves and dew.

It is a wicked, cynical village; one of those profane porticoes which are always found in the neighborhood of a great mystery. In it are congregated the most cunning and unscrupulous traders in human weakness, the foul flies that fatten upon human delusion. Every art created by the vice and folly of humanity are here represented by their most skillful professors.

But there are good simple people in the village, too; people plying those trades which lie so close to the elemental innocence of nature as to allow little opportunity for human perversity; those who supply the innocent milk and bread, for instance, with which even vice itself cannot dispense. Doubtless, bakers and dairymen are subject to human frailty like the rest of us, but there is something so healthy and normal in their occupations, something so nearly related to the punctual operations of nature, that it is impossible they should altogether escape the lustral influence

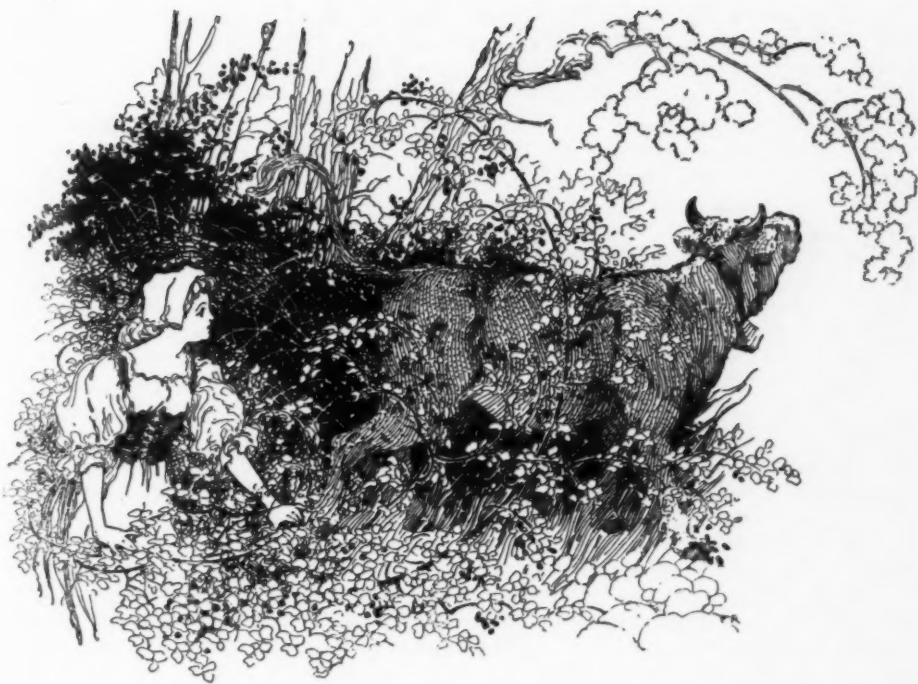
of the conditions under which they work. He or she who rises with the morning star to milk the cows on the misty hillside is obviously subjected to nobler influences than he who sees the dawn rising through the window curtains of a casino. If the dyer's hand is stained by the dye, shall not the hand of the milkmaid be made the whiter by the milk that flies through her fingers, pelted the waiting pail with so sweet and vigorous a downfall?

A simple, pure-hearted milkmaid was little Eunica, whose father's farm lay some distance from the village, and nearest of all the houses to the mysterious hill. Indeed, her father's meadows ran right up to the whispering edge of the wood, against which from childhood she had been warned as a place of evil, the abode of demons and witches. Her father was a sternly pious man, and had taken great care that his little daughter should be kept in ignorance of the significance of the village in which she lived and the mysterious traffic that made it so prosperous. With evil all around her, Eunica had grown up as white and untainted of heart as her innocent white breast, and her days went by in the simple occupations of the farm. She was but eighteen, barely a woman, and the dreams of womanhood had scarcely yet begun to stir in her blood. Her chief daily duty was to milk her little herd of five cows morning and evening, and thus sunrise and sunset found her each day high up in the pasture near the edge of the wood, calling her dappled charges by name with a sweet voice well known and beloved by each of them. Though this had been her daily task now for quite a long time, she never went up the pasture and looked towards the haunted wood without a thrill of fear and without a whispered invocation to the blessed saints to guard her against the wood-demons; and she had never yet been tempted to break her father's injunction against setting foot across the forbidden boundary. Yet there were times, in the fresh glitter of morning, or the soft dreamy lights of afternoon, when she sat lonely up there on her

milking stool, with no sound but that of the milk hissing into the pail, that her eyes would stray into the wood, and be caught with its look of serene beauty and quietude. It was hard to think that anything evil could lurk amid all that leafy freshness, and brooding peace. And sometimes a ray of sunshine would fall far into the wood and light up some distant flower that seemed more beautiful than any that grew outside. Yet her old habit of fear and obedience prevented this vague wonder from becoming a temptation, and the wood continued to remain to her a mystery in which she never dreamed of setting foot.

Shortly after she had reached the age of nineteen, however, two strange things happened to her. One evening in the late summer, she was milking one of the cows, right on the very edge of the wood. Suddenly, a curious thrill passed through her, as if some unseen presence was at her side. She looked up, and there, just on the edge of the wood, so close that she could have touched her, was standing a wonderful woman with a crown on her head, very still and very mysterious, and looking at her with eyes strange as the moon. Eunica was so startled that she could not stir or speak, but only look at the apparition with wonder and fear. Presently the apparition, from which proceeded a silvery radiance, and a fragrance as of wild roses, raised her hand and beckoned; and, as she beckoned, she said in a voice, secret and thrilling as that of a stream hidden among trees: "Come with me, beautiful maiden—you are too beautiful to spend your days milking the kine. Come with me and you shall wear a gold crown on your head, and silver shoes on your feet, and the princes and the captains of this world shall bow down their necks for love of you. Come with me to my kingdom, where all is music and singing and beauty and love."

But by this, though the spell of the presence was heavy as honey upon her, Eunica had understood that this was one of the evil spirits of which she had been warned, and hastily making the sign of the cross, she called on the Holy Mother to shield her. Instantly the image



had gone, and Eunica rubbed her eyes, aware only of a white stream from the overturned pail. There was nothing to be seen. The wood looked as innocent as ever.

After her first alarm was over, Eunica told herself that the vision had been a freak of her fancy, and, fearing to provoke the ridicule of her home-folk, decided to speak of it to no one. As the days went by, and nothing further came about, the occurrence gradually grew dim in her memory, and she had almost forgotten it when, on another afternoon, in the broad sunshine, the second strange thing happened. As before, she was bent over her pail, half a-dream between her work and a young girl's thoughts, when suddenly she was aroused by the sweetest of child's laughter near at hand. Looking up she saw just on the sunny margin of the wood, a little boy merrily pursuing butterflies through the brake, with a tiny bow and arrow. He had light rainbow-colored wings on his shoulders, and was as light and nimble as a bird. Suddenly he perched himself on a green bough

and, looking about him, saw Eunica. At sight of her he broke anew into his pretty laughter, and before she was aware of his purpose, he had discharged one of his arrows full at her breast.

Once more Eunica realized that here again was a wile of evil, and once more she crossed herself and called upon the Holy Mother; and again, as before, the apparition immediately vanished away, and nothing was to be seen in the wood but a bird pecking here and there or a leaf falling.

Though the arrow had fallen like a beam of light into her heart, she could find it nowhere in her bodice, nor could she mark any wound; nor even was she conscious of any pain. So again she told herself that it was all a fancy, and spoke of it to no one.

Yet a few days after this she became conscious of a strange dissatisfied aching of her heart such as she had never known before. Suddenly her peaceful days became irksome to her, and somehow to milk her cows morning and evening did not seem enough. To her shame also, being a pious girl, she found herself

turning her eyes morning and evening towards the wood, with a curiosity to explore its forbidden paths such as she had never felt before. Often she found herself remembering the words of the beautiful phantom with the crown upon her head: "You are too beautiful to spend your days milking the kine. Come with me, and you shall wear a gold crown on your head, and silver shoes on your feet, and the princes and the captains of this world shall bow down their necks for love of you."

Little Eunica felt very guilty for these thoughts and longings, and prayed hard to be delivered from them, and, with such success, that at last the winter came, and the cattle were housed in byres near the farm, and the wood was leafless, and the temptation was vanquished—till the spring.

June was well on the way when, one evening having milked four of her herd, she looked around for the little red cow that yet remained unmilked. She called her by her name. "Poppy! Poppy!" she called; and then hearing a trampling sound in the wood, she turned her head that way, and there was Poppy high up in the wood, evidently enjoying her truancy. She had broken through the fence while Eunica had been milking her companions, and thinking, as she, too, often thought, of the strange queen who had said: "You are too beautiful to spend your days milking the kine. Come with me, and you shall wear a gold crown on your head, and silver shoes on your feet and the princes and the captains of this world shall bow down their necks for love of you."

It was in vain she called to her truant in her most winning voice. Poppy had evidently no intention of being captured, and when Eunica made a feint of pursuit, she went off crashing up the wood at a great rate. Poor Eunica wrung her hands in despair. What was to be done! She was too far from home to call for help, and if she ran down the hill to bring it, Poppy would most likely have disappeared in the recesses of the wood. She must not lose sight of her, whatever happened—and Poppy would soon be out of sight, if she did not hasten. Was

she then about to enter the forbidden wood? Her heart beat high. Surely to enter it so was not a sin. Was it not rather her duty to save the charge committed to her—at whatever risk to herself? It was good reasoning, and it would have puzzled subtler logicians than Eunica to decide which way her duty lay. Meanwhile Poppy was pushing her way further and further among the bushes. There was no time to be lost, so, making the sign of the cross and calling on the Blessed Virgin to protect her, Eunica tucked up her petticoat, and plunged into the wood. She had only set foot beyond the boundary when a sense of the irrevocable step she had taken overcame her. She turned round and looked at the meadow where a few moments ago she had sat so tranquilly at her milking. There was her pail, almost within reach of her hand, but—on the other side. She had a strong feeling that it was worlds away, and that her life would never be the same again. But she was not at all unhappy, nor did she repent the step she had taken.

So soon as the little red cow saw her mistress approaching her, she scrambled off with uncouth speed—but what had come over little Eunica! She seemed to care no more whether Poppy escaped or not, and stole slowly up the wood as if she were in a dream, with a strange happy light on her face. Yes, so happy, so strangely happy she felt. It seemed almost as if her heart would break with the burden of its happiness—the happiness of some coming joy, some marvelous joy every moment coming nearer and nearer. The wood seemed filled with it, like the breath of sweet-brier, like faint far-away music welling up from underground. She could think of nothing else but this happiness that had come to her out of the air, this deep sweet satisfaction, as if her heart were heavy with honey. All else faded away as she wandered on, giving herself up to the spell that was drawing her—home, the pasture, the milking pail. She turned her head a moment, to look if they were still there, but there was nothing around her but the wood, with its boding silence, and its enchanted flowers.

She had never seen such flowers before. They hardly seemed as if they were—only flowers. There seemed a spell upon them, as if they held a secret in their tiny chalices. Some of them were waxen as death and white as a shroud, and some were red as newly spilled blood. They were very beautiful, yet they made her afraid. She dreaded to pluck them, lest they should change into some beautiful or wicked apparition, locked up by enchantment in a flower. Yet there was one flower she dared to pluck—a fairy waxen thing, rising on a straight black stem, a flower of two blossoms, each one a tiny golden crown; two golden crowns, one on each side of the black stem. Eunica's superstition whispered that this was a message from the queen of the wood, she who had said, "Come with me, and you shall wear a gold crown on your head, and silver shoes on your feet." She slipped the flower into her bosom and went on and on through the wood, forgetting all but the honey in the air, and the music in her heart. She gave no more thought to her little red cow or to her home, where by this time they would be lighting the candles, for the dusk was falling, and the stars were beginning to flash faintly in the wake of the sunset; the spell of the wood was so deep and sweet upon her. Strangely, too, all her fears of the evil spirits said to haunt the wood had passed from her, and the shadows gathering among the trees brought no tremor to her heart. Not even was she afraid when the wood began to fill with the night noises of little creatures that fall asleep at sunrise, and wake only at the rising of the moon. Still she walked on, pushing aside the green boughs, walking to the destination of some happy event, which, in some mysterious way, the wood promised her. But soon the wood grew so dark that she could no longer find her way among its tangled copse—the more so as it began to be precipitous, and rough with scattered boulders. Eunica was growing sleepy, too, and presently coming to a little clearing she found a place of soft moss and dry leaves and lay herself down and slept.

She slept as only children do, with a whole-hearted abandonment, a reliance, complete and involuntary, on protective powers that watch over the sleep of innocent lives. For several hours she slept on, unconscious of all the nocturnal business of the wood. The moon rose and flooded her young beauty with its strange light. Curious birds called to each other with hoarse voices of uncouth longing; tiny four-footed things pattered over the fallen leaves, peered into the sleeping face, and whisked away into darkness. Mysterious sounds moaned and murmured all about her; and when the clouds came up the sky to meet the moon, the wood was stenciled with many a weird and fitful pattern of light and shadow. Still Eunica slept on, but about midnight she was suddenly aroused by sounds that came to her half-asleep, like the far-off murmur of angry music. She sat up, and noted a bright glow in the wood, illuminating the trees and making still paler the setting moon. It was as if the wood were on fire some distance away, but the bushes were so thick that she could not see the source of the light. Cautiously she rose and walked in its direction, and, meanwhile, the strange outcry which had awakened her grew more and more articulate. From mere unfeatured sound it grew into a fierce drone of orgiastic voices; and presently the haze of light broke into dazzling rays and the shadows of human figures crossed and recrossed the effulgence in fantastic silhouette. As Eunica stole nearer, she suddenly came in full sight of a saturnalia strange indeed in the middle of a green wood, but stranger still to her young eyes. Though she understood nothing of her adventure, she had accidentally stumbled on the beautiful gate of hell. Eunica knew nothing of all this. She was fascinated and frightened, that was all; and she drew away from the surging circle of light into which for a moment she had set foot, and hid herself in a thick covert of hazels, with nuts still summer-yellow among the friendly roughness of their leaves. The cavern of light, for so to Eunica seemed the entrance to the Hill of Venus, was thronged like a beehive with vine-



wreathed figures whirling in mad dances and holding aloft golden cups overflowing with wine. Goat-legged musicians played on strange pipes, and toad-like dwarfs beat incessantly on enormous drums, while, full in the light, a beautiful woman held a white bird in her hand and sang.

Suddenly the music and the singing stopped in a terror and a cry went up—"The Queen."

In a moment there stood in the entrance of the cave a woman a head taller than mortal woman, a woman made of gold and porcelain, with the blue seas for her eyes, and fairy sea-weeds for her hair. Her feet were made of sea-foam. Many servants surrounded her. She had come in a tempest of wrath to the door of her palace, and her servants held a youth on whom she turned her angry eyes—in vain.

As Eunica looked on with fluttering heart she recognized the strange woman who had said to her: "Come with me, beautiful maiden,—you are too beautiful to spend your days milking the kine. Come with me, and you shall wear a gold crown on your head and silver shoes on your feet, and the princes and the captains of this world shall bow down their necks for love of you."

The youth stood there, white and fearless as a god. In all the glare surrounding him his face shone strangely pure. It was like the dawn rising over the dregs and the scattered roses.

The revelers waited for their queen to speak. For a moment her eyes challenged the eyes of the captive, but receiving no response save defiance, she turned to her people:

"What think you, my people?" she said.

All stood listening; the dancers, the musicians, the quiet woods, and Eunica, covered up with the hazels as with a cloak made of nuts and leaves.

"What think you, my people?" she repeated.

And then she answered, with a smile more terrible than the frown of the true gods:

"This man is—pure."

Thereon a laughter arose from the vine-leaved throng that shook the very

woods. Every night-voice seemed to chuckle and revel and whistle, even grovel, in laughter.

When the mocking had died down, the queen asked:

"What shall be done with him?"

On this the prisoner made a sign that he would speak.

"He would speak," said the queen, "let us hear him. Speak, dear Snowflake—Let go his hands," she added.

"Venus," answered the boy, "you are the Lie of the Truth of Beauty, you are the Lie of the Beauty of Woman—"

Here the dwarfs beat their drums, but the queen silenced them. Her face was grave. She was a goddess. She had descended from heaven. She had not merely climbed from earth. She loved this defiant purity. Had she not loved Adonis?

"Speak on, thou Tendril," she said, stilling the tumult.

"Venus," reiterated the youth, still loving the name, "I came to these woods seeking that Beauty which is Woman, seeking that Woman who is Beauty, seeking that Beauty which is Truth; following the honey-guides of your bees, the dreaming calls of your doves, the lure of your silent lights and shadows, believing each little flower on the way, trusting each leaf on the tree, asking the path from every blade of grass.

"It was my dream that that Beauty, that Woman, was you.

"In a far land I heard that you were more beautiful than Beauty, more Woman than Woman—"

The youth paused, and quickly breaking a sapling branch from a tree overshadowing his head, he snapped it into two stems. Then he waited. He still loved the false phantom of beauty too much—to make the sign of the cross.

"Why art thou silent, Blossom?" asked the queen suddenly, and as she spoke the hazel twigs were smitten from his hands, and his hands were bound behind him. It was too late—to make the sign of the cross.

"Say on," said the queen in mockery.

"Instead," he continued as if his hands were still his own, and the queen had not spoken, "instead—"

But before he could speak more, the queen made a sign of angry impatience:

"No more!" she said. "Your insults weary me," and the young man's captors gagged his mouth with green leaves.

Again turning to her people, the queen spoke:

"You have heard. I give him to you for your sport. Do with him as you will."

So saying she turned away and once more entered her palace, leaving the young man to his fate. Thereon ensued a pandemonium against which Eunica closed her eyes in fear and horror; and when at length she heard several voices crying "Let us destroy him," she fainted away.

Morning was beginning to steal softly through the wood when Eunica again opened her eyes. The light was still dim and the shapes of things indistinct. But the wood was once more quiet, the wild rout had vanished, and she looked in vain for the cavernous entrance to the hill which an hour or two before had glowed with such an evil glare. The wood was once more a solitude of dewy leaves and awakening birds.

Presently she seemed to hear a low moan close at hand. She listened. Again she heard it, and then out of the memories of the strange night there came the thought of the beautiful youth that had defied Venus. Could it be he that moaned thus pitifully in the wood? She rose cautiously from her hiding place and looked about her. Then she stepped out softly into the wood, taking little frightened steps. She had walked but a few paces, when a sight met her eyes which shook from her a little cry of fear. There, facing her, among the branches but a little distance from the ground swung the youth. He swung with his arms extended between two trees growing side by side, his persecutors having bound each wrist with strong withes to a branch of either tree and left him there to die. His eyes were closed. His face was very white, and he hung there so still that Eunica shuddered lest he should be dead. But even as she looked on him his chest heaved and once more a great moan came from his lips.

Then little Eunica knew why she had

been drawn so mysteriously into the wood, knew at last the destiny to which her heart had called her.

Coming closer to the figure she spoke reassuringly.

"Have courage," she said, "I will help you."

But the youth made no response. Then, looking around, she gathered together such small fragments of rock as

lay about till she had made a heap high enough on which to stand and reach the boughs to which his hands were tied. Then taking a dagger, which she always carried in her bosom to protect herself if need be at her lonely milking, she quickly cut the withes asunder and received the poor wounded figure in her arms. She was strong with her open-air life, but the burden of his young manhood needed all her strength, till she could lay it down on the moss. He was still unconscious of the beautiful hands that were ministering to him, and of the young eyes that looked down upon him with the mingled tenderness of a mother and a maiden.

He lay there so supinely that a terror shot through her heart:

"What if he were to die!"

The pretty tinkle of a brook close by suggested that a draught of its cool water might revive him, and at the thought she noticed lying near at hand a gold cup left behind by the revelers. Taking this down to the stream she had soon brought it back brimming with

water. Raising the youth's head gently,—

"Drink," she said. Her voice seemed to stir him to some consciousness, and he moved his lips, and drank a little. With loving patience she urged him again and again, till at length color began to return to his cheeks and he moved his limbs and sighed. Then, after a long while, he opened his eyes, and saw her face bent over him. He looked at it a

long while, like a child just out of his sleep. Then presently he said:

"How beautiful you are! Are you one of the Blessed Saints?"

"Indeed not," answered Eunica, smiling, "I am a simple maiden. I live close by at my father's farm, and my name is Eunica."

"My name," said the youth, "is Argalus. I am a Prince and I came hither seeking Venus. What do you, so good and beautiful, in this evil wood?"

"I came seeking one of my cows that escaped me," she answered, blushing to herself at the other half of the truth which she suppressed, "and—

why!" she exclaimed, "there she is!"

Indeed it was Poppy coming docilely toward her mistress, and repenting her escapade. Eunica went forward and patted her reassuringly, and Poppy lowed in response.

"She brings us our breakfast!" said Eunica laughing. "A cup of milk will refresh you," and thereupon she took the gold cup and speedily filled it.

Prince Argalus drank it gratefully, and it so revived him that presently he



was able to sit up. After a little he was able even to stand and look about him.

"It was all an evil dream," he said, passing his hand over his brows, "a dream of the evil beauty I can dream no more."

Then turning to Eunica, "Maiden," he said, "may I go with you to your father's house and rest there awhile and ask a boon of him?"

"Surely you may," answered Eunica. "Our home is close by, just on the edge of the wood. But are you not too weary to walk even so short a way?" But by this the Prince was manifestly recovered no little from his weakness, and professed himself ready to start at once; yet, for all that, as they made their way through the morning woodland his limbs would sometimes tremble beneath him, and he had to lean against the little milk maid's shoulder for support. Sometimes she insisted that he stop and rest awhile, and they would sit down side by side on the moss, and he would look at her till she cast down her eyes in confusion, and over and over he told her how beautiful she was, and before they came to the clearing on which stood the

little farm-house he had told her how much he loved her.

As they stood on the edge of the wood with the familiar pasture so welcome to Eunica's eyes all glittering with morning gossamers before them:

"Do you know," he asked, "the boon I would ask of your father?"

Eunica hung her head blushing, and falteringly answered a negative.

"I would ask him to give you to me for my Princess."

Eunica did not look up, but two tears of joy stole out of her down-cast eyelids and her body trembled.

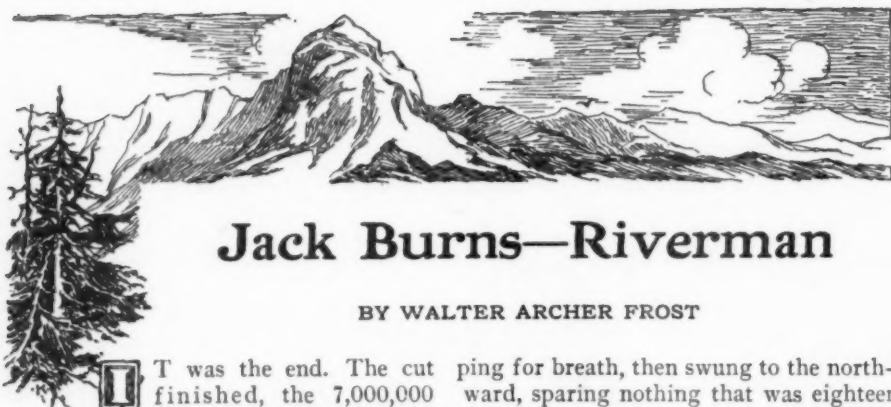
"I am not worthy," she said at last; and, as she spoke, the strange flower with the two crowns on one stem fell from her bodice.

"Can you love me?" asked the Prince taking her face between his hands and turning it up to his. For one swift shy moment her eyes looked into his.

"I do," she answered.

And then the two went down the pasture together, and before many days had gone by little Eunica sat on a throne and there was a gold crown on her head and silver shoes on her feet, even as the wood-goddess had foretold.





Jack Burns—Riverman

BY WALTER ARCHER FROST

IT was the end. The cut finished, the 7,000,000 feet of pine had been shot over the "skids," and John Burns, testing his "pike" pole with a shove which bent it nearly double, went out into the current with the last raft of logs that a "boom" would ever hold on the Fox.

It was because, being built like a tug, he could shove the logs off when they ran aground, that Burns had been sent down with the raft. In addition to this complimentary recognition of his strength, the work was pleasurable and the pay good. But he was not occupied with that part of it; his thoughts were on the hills now receding before his eyes.

The forest which had covered them since Time was young, had been his philosopher and friend, welcoming him to its lost and unmapped water-ways, fonts of the deep cathedrals which the Norways pillared and gave a roof as wide as the arching sky. And the great trees had done more than welcome him; they had drawn him close until he had won the steadiness and undeviating fairness of themselves. The wilderness had given him home, and had been his livelihood, and he had thought to die there in the pine.

But that was not to be; a "baching" homesteader had gone southward to a city far away and told of the timber round his shack; within a year an inspector came, a railroad's "right of way" struck in as far as it could, and six months after that, an army of "lumber-jacks" swept in and bore the forest down. They sheared a thousand acres without stop-

ping for breath, then swung to the northward, sparing nothing that was eighteen inches or over at the butt. And Burns went with them, not in diminished friendship for the trees, but because he knew that the inevitable had come.

That was the beginning. The end came when the giants from the remotest ridges went to form the raft which was now floating southward to the mill.

He had lived with them for thirty years, and he was glad that he was going with them now; and this and a thousand things came to his mind to tell him of all that he was leaving far behind. Close at hand, he caught the soft "slush" of a loon, as coasting on her long, careless slant, she struck the water, half covering herself with foam. Here, the flow of a cedar swamp joined the stream on which he rode, and he knew that, even in the dark ooze, pure water could be had at the foot of every tree. As he passed a "barren," a duck veered from her course, to pass swiftly on gently whirring wings. And Nature, with her myriad voice called, in it all, a long good-by.

He answered it with all his heart; then, striking his "corks" deep, as if to hold himself, he turned his face to the southward, where men lived and died, yet never saw the trees. A poor life that must be, he thought, and it would be his now. Not even by hearsay, did he know of it, but the bigness of the things with which he had to deal, left him no doubt of self or fear of what might be.

When he left the office of the Flambeau Lumber Company, he found himself, for the first time in his life, upon a

city street. The noise and the varying scenes puzzled him less than the seeming confusion of the crowd, and, a little dazed by this, he was looking quietly here and there when a pair of runaway horses, mad with fear, smashed down upon him. He had not time to avoid their rush, and fierce as they, sprang straight to meet them, a great hand clamping on either bit and forcing their heads backward until the hot necks arched like loops and the great beasts stood mastered, motionless. And, almost before the crowd had gathered, John Burns had been offered a place on the police force, and, having nothing else to do, he took it.

The Chief led him to the City Hall, where the Clerk, telling him to hold up his right hand, absent-mindedly chanted in a foreign tongue, then, handing him a pen, concluded:

"—So help you God what is your name?"

Burns looked at him in surprise.

"Talkin' to me?" he asked.

"Sure," said the Chief. "He's giving you the oath."

Burns thrust a long arm across the desk.

"Let me look at it."

The Clerk returned the Chief's wink but obeyed.

Burns read slowly, aloud:

STATE OF MICHIGAN, } ss.
WOLF COUNTY. }

He stopped.

"What does 'ss' mean?"

"South Section," replied the Clerk, who did not know.

"This's the middle o' th' state," said Burns, and no one speaking, he read on:

I.....being duly sworn,
a resident of the city of.....,
do solemnly swear that I will support
the Constitution of the United States
and the Constitution of the State of
Michigan and that I will faithfully per-
form the duties of..... to the
best of my ability. So help me God.

"Sign here," said the Clerk.

And, in a heavy, upright hand, he wrote "John Burns."

"What hev' I got to do?" he asked, as the Clerk signed the jurat and affixed the seal.

"I'll tell you."

And the new policeman and his Chief went down the stairs.

"I'm green now," said Burns, his eyes upon his schedule, "but it wont be long before I know my way around."

"I imagine not."

And the Chief smiled as he gave Burns a uniform and star.

When John Burns started on his beat, the next morning, he had, to use his own words, "found th' trail;" his duties were photographed in an indelible memory.

And he went about them as if he were "running" a section line.

The first irregularity that he saw was a slot machine operated in front of a saloon. His schedule said that a slot machine was a "gambling device," and that gambling was *against the law*. So he de-vitalized the machine with his club and kicked the fragments into the street. After that he went back for Dan Sullivan the proprietor, whom he hauled from behind the bar and joggled, when the captive resisted him.

Sullivan's "bouncer," Nolan, put in an appearance, confident in his reputation for "slinging an ugly left." But Burns was ambidextrous, and, in addition to quite a novel reach, showed fearful striking power, with the result that he carried the "bouncer" and towed Sullivan to the jail. In the next three hours, ten other slot machines went out of business, five more followed in the afternoon, and, by supper-time, fifteen variously mused-up proprietors besides Dan Sullivan were out on bail.

Burns was then free for the day and might have loafed the evening through, in the quarters, or, in his civilian's clothes, gone out with the others to encourage, through the night, what they were supposed to *discourage* through the day. But instead, he tucked something bulky under his arm, snuffed from the wind the direction in which the river lay and, by zigzagging through back streets, soon found the bank.

He strolled along it until he came to a boat which was not working, threw in his bundle, and jumped in after it, and, for a dozen long minutes, sculled noiselessly up stream.

Then, with a snort of satisfaction, he tore loose the suffocating collar which bound his throat, stripped off the heavy uniform and kicked it out of his way, and gratefully pulled on the bull's wool and akum shirt and baggy, "stagged" trousers which he loved, at length to stand erect and comfortable, hat off, the strong wind lifting his bristling hair. And it was in his lumber-jack's rig, that he soon seated himself leisurely, and, pipe hanging sure and warm, drove the dory's bow on, with the city's lights floating well astern.

For an hour, the oars drove with the steadiness and power of a motor, and then fell in the bottom to lie there while Burns landed and walked through the moon-lit second growth. It was good to be there; to feel the underbrush at his knees and the give of the loam's fragrant cushion beneath his feet; to feel the strong trunks and touch their bark as one would lay his hand upon the shoulder of a friend, and for long, he strode up and down the silent aisles, soothed, reassured and comforted. Then, heavy-hearted, he pulled back down the river, back to a world which was not his world.

He went to bed, but the strangeness of the place, its lights and its noises, and, most of all, the utter absence of his loved fresh air, made sleep an impossibility, and he dressed, and, just to pass the time, covered his day beat again. This done, he struck off into a part of the city new to him.

Here the streets were quiet and fairly empty. But, before long, he saw a light in a corner saloon. The place was ordered shut at eleven; but it was open now, at half-past one, and he crossed the street. As he did so, he heard the lock click. When his shoulder sent the door in, thirty men sprang up from tables on which were money, drinks, dice, cards and wheels.

Burns did not understand it, but, when one of the men pulled a gun, Burns struck him heavily.

Then a man rose and came toward the new policeman, self-contained, smooth-faced, clean-cut, impassive, menacing and, when directly in front of him, leaned still closer, saying:

"Get out of here!"

Ignoring him, Burns saw that the rest were forming for a rush.

"I wouldn't. Squat on them chairs!"

That was all he said, and he did not raise his voice. For eight years John Burns had "bossed" crews of mighty rivermen; from the hardest livers, they had come to be the most obedient on the "drive," and the gamblers sprang for the chairs as if to reach them were the one bright object of their lives.

The man who had addressed him stood his ground, but hostility had given way to interest.

"You're the man who did Dan Sullivan's bouncer?"

"He come at me," replied the lumber-jack, who considered the cause more important than the fact.

The other nodded, with a fighter's appreciation of a Man.

"No use *my* taking you on then. But, when you get tired of the force, come here and work for me."

Burns had not come to talk, and he implied it directly.

"Git over there!"

The reveille of his night-stick on the roulette-wheels reached the ears of the night-watchman, Sleeney, who hurried in.

"Hello, Jerry! What's the trouble, Burns?" he asked.

"Trouble?" The new officer stared down in blank astonishment. "Kin you look here an' ask what th' trouble is?"

Sleeney laughed. "Oh, I see; you don't understand." Then, turning: "This wont happen again, Jerry. He's a new one, and aint 'on' just yet. Burns, this is Jerry Doyle. The Chief ought to have told you: he's a good fellow and we don't bother him."

"Good feller?" The new policeman's eyes showed uncertainty.

"Why—eh—Burns, look here: Doyle gives us our \$200 a month, and we let the boys come here after hours, now and then, for a drink or to fly the wheels. You see now, don't you? Simple enough, I should think."

"But it's ag'in th' law."

Sleeney had no time for a policeman who was as unbusiness-like as this, and he swung round to the others, saying:

"Don't mind him: he's just come down from the woods and they're pretty slow up there. Come up and we'll all have a good, high one, and—"

"You stays where you air! Sleeney, *close up!*" And with the words, the forest cruiser hurled the watchman like an empty sack, across the room.

It was over in a second, but, in that time, a man had climbed through one of the windows, and, though Burns' club, flying like a slug, knocked him down, it did little more than graze him, and he was up again and away. There were, in that high-walled room, men who were never "annoyed" by the police, men whose relations with Jerry Doyle it would not do to have noised about the state, and the fugitive tore hot-foot to the "palatial home" of the alderman boss of Ward 1, "Billy" Shields.

The "boss" alderman was at home, and, ten minutes later, with his "leading citizen" expression and manner, he walked briskly into the room where John Burns held the inexorable control.

A glance at the crowd, and a second and longer look at Burns showed him the situation, and, after distributing reassuring smiles and winks, he turned to the only man in the room who had not sought his eyes:

"Officer Burns," he began easily, "I commend you for your zeal in enforcing the laws of our fair city, which, I might say," and then, realizing that he had gotten off upon his latest installation address, he made a fresh start—

"I don't mind saying, frankly, that I *take* to a man like you; permit me," and his gloved hand tried to span the other's half-closed fist. "The oath which you have so recently taken, that oath, which—" here was a chance for oratory, but the man he addressed seemed not to hear him, and he choked, resuming relevantly, "and *therefore*, my criticism of you is that you have too little discretion and too much initiative. Ha! Ha!"

But it happened that Burns was absolutely deaf, and the alderman's laugh suddenly turned into a spasmodic cough.

"Now and then, of course," he hurried on, "the law must be literally enforced, but these men—"

Against his will, he looked at the granolithic face a foot above his own, and fear possessed him.

"—They *can't* be brought into court or put under arrest."

"Why can't they? What's wrong with them? I'll guarantee to put every 'swamper' o' th' lot inside th' hut in half an hour!"

The other turned desperately.

"Don't you see! They—that is to say—in matters of this kind—Do you understand?"

"You mean you an' th' men that's on th' force is *bought*?"

"No need of putting it in such a nasty way, Burns. But I'll see you get your share of it."

And, as he spoke, he held out a roll of bills.

Then it seemed to him that the sun had burst before his eyes, and for the wild fraction of a second before he hit the floor, he vaguely wondered if a Tennessee mule could kick as hard as John Burns, the man who did not "understand," could strike. And, because he did not understand, Burns held them there until ten A. M., then marched them to the Court House and drove them up the stairs.

The Circuit Court was in session, Judge Barrows on the bench; but the sergeant-at-arms who tried to hold the door, was thrown back by those who entered under the lumber-jack's command.

"Git up into th' open," a great voice said softly. And Alderman "Boss" Shields, impelled by the hand which had gathered half his coat, slid out as if on casters, and faced the Judge. Beside him towered an unknown man in policeman's uniform, but with the spiked shoes which woodsmen wear.

"I'm John Burns," said the big man quietly, "an' what I'm goin' to say is so."

His square, brown face was restful in its strength, itself a witness hard to parallel. And no one challenging him, he continued:

"I went onto th' police force yesterday, first takin' my oath to enforce th' law. Things was wide open; slot machines and wheels was bein' used, an' I

smashed 'em, an' put th' men that run 'em, into jail.

"Then, this mornin', along about half-past one, I found this gang o' muskrats drinkin' an' gamblin' in Doyle's saloon, an' when I arrested 'em, this little feller I got here comes in an' said they couldn't be took up or brung into court; said Doyle paid the police \$200 a month fer his place to be let alone. Shields said he'd see I got my share of it, an' he lugged out a bunch o' money an' held it out to me. I was disappointed I didn't hev a cant hook by me—that bein' a handy thing to maul a crowd; but they wasn't one layin' round, so I jest ketched him a jerk with my fist, an' jostled 'em all up together in a corner so they couldn't git separated, an' here they are.

"That's all they is to it." He turned to those at his back. "If any of you wants to say I aint got it straight, you got a chance now. Talk away!"

In a heavy silence, he faced the court again.

"I'm through. This here aint th' place fer me. I don't understand it, an' I don't want to. I come out o' th' woods, an' I'm goin' back in; it's th' only place fer a lumber-jack like me."

"Burns!" cried the old judge, "I pray that the Providence which sent you will keep you here; we need you, the city needs you, the Law itself needs men who are strong and clean and fearless, men like you. And, if you will stay and work with me, we will root out this ring of trickery and wrong, and make men more as they were meant to be!"

The words struck home, and he was turning back, when, through the open window came a breath of air, only a taste of the north-west, but something of its tang told him of the world he knew and loved so well, of streams grown wide and deep with melting snows, of spring-awakened Nature, bursting buds and leaves on trails of unknown age, worn smooth by soundless moccasin; the deer were coming out now, at the riverheads; the fish were rising fast in favorite pools and the great trees were swaying happily in windswept, endless miles of restful green.

It called him, claimed him as its own child.

And so the man went forth to it without another look or word, for, in the gladness of it all, his heart was bursting full.



Tippy, the Jerk, Comes Home

BY HERBERT ILLSLEY

ILLUSTRATED BY HANSON BOOTH

I

TIPPY, the Jerk, paused at the top of the long hill and, dumping his "phony" peddler's pack to the ground beneath a great oak by the wayside, stood with a peculiar, characteristic forward lurch of his left shoulder, gazing down on the ugly little village of Hoogs which lay sprawled in the valley below.

He was the "gay cat" of the band of yeggs, otherwise criminal tramps, to which he belonged, the "finder," the member who traveled in advance of the raiders, "sizing up" the town. Having located the bank which it was proposed to "crack," learned where the safe stood, and if possible its date and make, the site of the police station if there was one, or where the policeman lived if there was not, and other necessary details of a similar nature, he would, in the small hours of the next morning, report his discoveries to the gang whom he would meet at a given spot in the near-by woods, and disappear cityward.

The "soup-men" and the "outsiders," or watchers, would do the rest, and in the course of a few days his share of the "walnut" cracked would be mysteriously placed in his hands by some "yegg post-master," usually a low-class lodging-house keeper or bartender whom, perhaps, he never had seen before in his life. That would round off and finish this deal. By the time he had "blown his bazoo" dry among the barrooms, dance-halls, and "pool-palaces" of the slums, there would come to him, in the same mysterious manner, a scrawl of rude penmanship on a torn-off corner of dirty brown paper to this effect.

"Dump steen—"

This being construed means, "We have another job on hand. Meet us at dump

sixteen, Wryerbuth's saloon, on the fourth of next month, to receive your instructions."

Then again the evolutionary process of obtaining money would repeat itself, and so on until, in a few years at the latest, the "hammer," not the "walnut," would crack, and afterwards—stripes, plenty of work during the day, and at night a very small barred room admirably suited for somber reflection.

As Tippy stood there now at the top of the hill, his false pack at his feet, hat drawn over his eyes, one of which blinked behind a paralyzed drooping lid, suggestive of "tipping the wink," whence came the first part of his nickname, the expression in his round, stiff-fleshed face was not that of meditation. Rather it was a sort of satisfaction that shone there, tinged with a smile of victory.

Tippy had been born in this sleepy little spot called Hoogs, and it had kicked him out—kicked him out hard—through the jail door, after he had served his term as a common thief. He had been taught scarcely anything else than to steal, save that it was wrong to be caught, and the town, by catching him, had injured him deeply. He never could forget it. Afterwards, when all doors were shut to him, he had taken to the road as the only path left open, if he were to eat and sleep and breathe for any length of time.

The way had been rough, rougher than he had thought any way in the whole world could be, and many and many a time he had felt like ending it violently and without delay. He would have done so but for a single reason—he wished to revisit his native town again, in the night, that was all! It had ruined him by catching him "with the goods," when he was a drunkard's helpless little

orphan who didn't know any better than to leave "signs" behind him, and was trying, with all his feeble sense, to get enough to eat and drink. It was fifty dollars that he had taken then. His stiff cheeks crinkled in an ironical smile as he thought of what the sum would probably amount to this time.

Impulsively, exultantly, he swung up his pack, and with the jerky yet sturdy gait of all those who, like him, are formed with one foot pointing straight ahead and the other toeing-out in a more natural manner, a peculiarity which was responsible for the second part of his nickname, he started for the village. He had no fear of recognition; fourteen years of absence, his growth from childhood to manhood, the drooping lid, which had been acquired only recently, had so changed him that even his own mother, if he had had one, would not have known him.

Just beyond the brook that crossed the road at the foot of the hill he came to a large house painted yellow, with pillars and a porch in the old colonial style, and he showed his teeth grimly as his eyes rested upon it.

This was where the judge had lived, the man whose part of the wrong against him had been to "send him up" after the others had caught him. No doubt he was a stockholder in the bank and would lose by its robbery. It was more than likely that he had cash of his own in the safe. Tippy greedily wondered how much. If only he might walk in and ask the old stiff! Then when he got his "rake-off" he would know just what interest he had collected on that old debt.

He passed the dwelling with a side-long glance, lowering yet tinged with jubilation, and presently arrived at the village blacksmith-shop, set back from the road under a fine elm just where it had always stood.

Tippy approached, prepared to "dicker," or apparently to dicker, with the smith, while he covertly located the sledge-hammer, the pincers, an iron bar, and a monkey-wrench. These articles his gang never used on a job, but they were valuable means of keeping the "bulls," that is, the police, guessing.

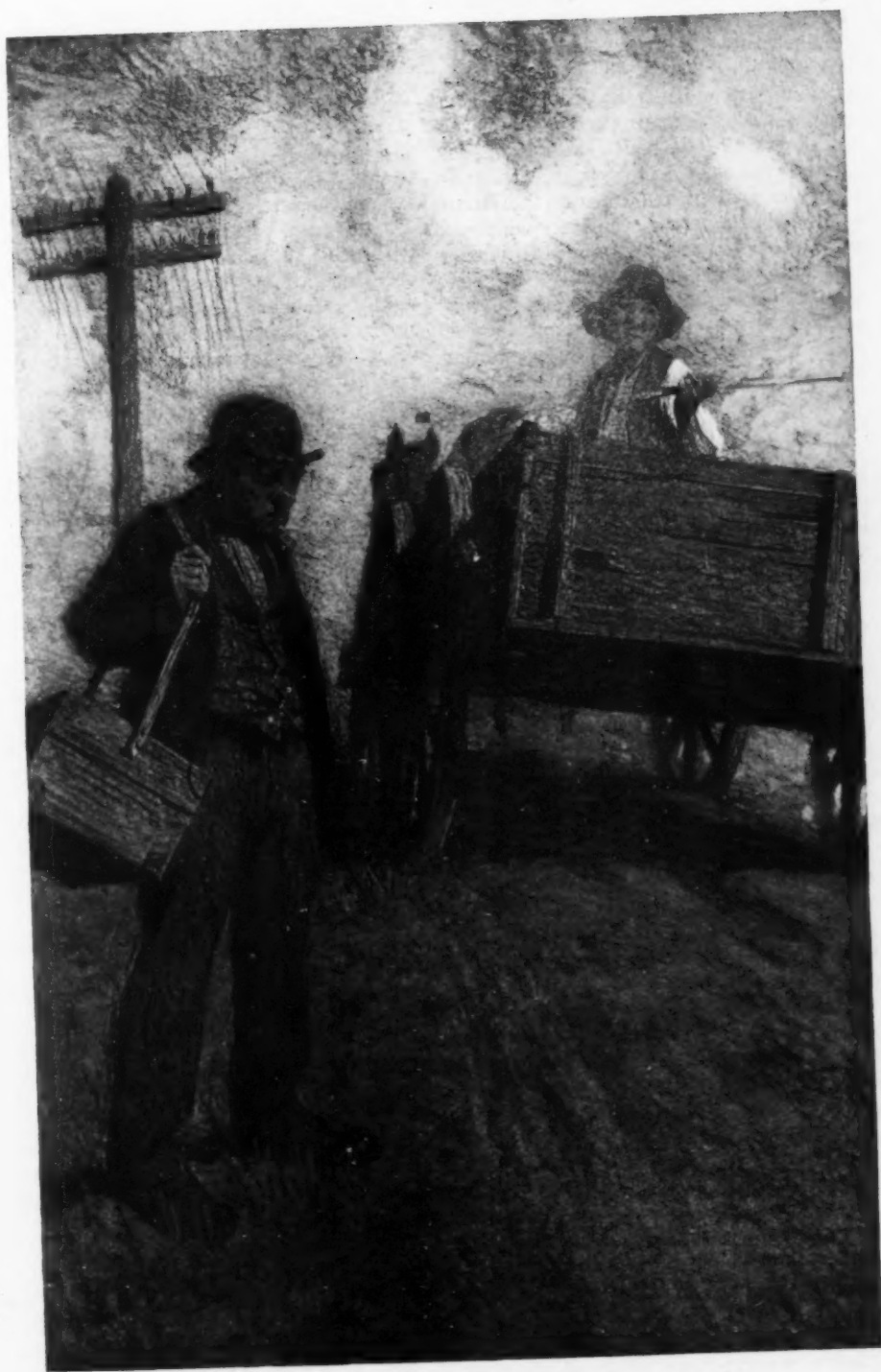
Each gang of yeggs having a method of procedure somewhat different from that of any other, it was the custom of Tippy's crowd to break into the town blacksmith shop and, removing some of the tools to the scene of the robbery leave them to be found there. Thus the "bulls," charging the crime to another gang which always employed such tools, would be thrown off the track. All that Tippy's expert pals needed was a jimmy, which they carried with them, a few sticks of dynamite, with a tomato can of hot water in which to soak the explosive until the white nitroglycerin rose to the surface, two half-pint bottles in which to convey this "soup," a bar of yellow soap, a fuse, a match, and a dark lantern.

His first glance about the shop told him that the interior was as it always had been, and he knew it well. He could have put his hand on every tool there, even in the dark and at the first try. There creaked the dusty bellows in the same old place, the glowing forge, the hammers and anvil and heaps of horse-shoes and boxes of nails and iron bars and wrenches, even the broad bands of greasy leathers for swinging cattle, all were just where they had been when as a "kid" he had played around the premises. The only change that struck him was in the smith himself. Instead of the wiry, grim and aged deacon, with toothless gums and stiff neck, whom he remembered, there stood a young fellow, smutty and callow, whom Tippy recognized as the former proprietor's son. Probably the father was dead; Tippy hoped so. He wished that the whole town might die at once and be buried out of sight and hearing; or better still, that every hayseed of them all might live to learn the revenge he should take on them that night and then "croak" in a wild frazzle of shame and impotent anger.

"Buy somet'ing?" he asked of the blacksmith, unslinging his pack tentatively.

The young fellow rested his arm along the handle of his bellows and shifted his quid.

"What ye got?" he returned, eyeing Tippy and the pack, glad in his lone-



"That's Shaw's," he answered in a queer, monotonous voice

someness to exchange a word with anybody.

"Soap, needles, t' read, collar buttons, lots o' t' ings," said Tippy, in a near imitation of the itinerant peddler. All he wished was information, and he never sold anything if he could avoid doing so.

He saw a man driving past at the moment and recognized him as the storekeeper at the corner, the man who had owned the fifty dollars—the "stiff" who had prosecuted him when he was a helpless little kid. In that bloke's store was a kerosene barrel, and—a jimmy at the window in the dark midnight, a running stream of oil, a match—Ah, what a revenge! In the morning there wouldn't be enough of that building left to kindle a fire. And the beauty of it was that the owner should learn that it was the innocent little kid he had persecuted who had done it; for within a few days he should be informed by letter from a long, safe distance.

The smith aroused Tippy from his reverie by saying:

"Aint got no terbaccer, hev ye?"

"No," Tippy answered shortly.

He always spoke as little as possible on these occasions, for it was not well that his customers should become closely acquainted with his voice and accent. But in order to switch matters into the channels of business he added:

"Dey cashed de last box on me down t' de bank."

"Yes, they did!" the young fellow sneered. "I s'pose ye sold it t' th' old man, didn't ye! Or p'raps 'twas Shaw! They both use much on't!"

He gave the bellows a strong blow as if to end the interview. These men in the bank were well-known antagonists of the tobacco habit, and the smith conceived a sudden dislike for this greasy peddler who presumed to jolly him.

"Dey took it fer t' help me out," said Tippy quick to perceive that he had made some sort of a blunder. He had no wit of his own, but the chief had a little, and in the dim attics and fetid poolrooms of the cities, and along the vile-smelling docks, had communicated something of it to the other "Johnnie-yeggs," who thereby became ready with set answers

to nearly every conceivable question pertaining to the "perfesh."

"Oh, yes, they're great on the help, they be—'speci'ly on th' terbaccer! Old Eldridge is—'n' Shaw too!" the smith jeered.

Tippy looked at him quickly, but said nothing, though he felt again that he had spoken the wrong word.

The name Eldridge had awakened within his soggy mind a memory different from all others connected with the town, and he was busy trying to reconstruct the long broken and rusty links of it. It was something sweet, intoxicatingly sweet, and the central figure of it was a bright face set in sunny curls, a face with the most beautiful eyes and the reddest of curved lips. There was always a look of indifference on this lovely face whenever Tippy, who had been Patsy then, came in for its regard, except when the indifference became disgust or contempt or withering superciliousness. He remembered this perfectly, knew that it had always been so, but the memory took nothing away from the exquisitely delicate coloring of the picture.

Through the layer on layer of fierce, miserable, soul-withering experiences that encrusted his heart, the light of that ethereal image began to glow radiantly, warmly, exultantly. A strange thrill of ecstasy passed through him as suddenly the whole ravishing vision stood before his mind's eye—the lovely face with its red lips and white teeth, the daintily moulded form in its soft, fresh, sacred garments, the faint rustle of which he could hear, and the delicate perfume which he could inhale at the moment as certainly as if she were there in person. And he was then a little boy and she a little girl.

Slowly, with a hitch and a pull, he hoisted his pack to his shoulder and sidling awkwardly from the door jerked somberly away down the dusty hill.

The shady lane that wound, tangled with grass and bushes, to the "basin" where he had learned to swim in the old days, lay at his left, and he gazed upon the well remembered sheet of water in a kind of stupor, for it remained in his

memory a lake a mile square, while here it was in reality a little play lake, a pool, that he could easily toss a stone across. How big it had seemed the first time he swam it, and how proud he had been of the magnificent feat! The stir of pleasure that the memory revived within him died suddenly as he caught sight of the house at the east of the pond, and his cheeks again crinkled in a smile, sardonic, bitter, yet exultant, for there was where the constable who arrested him lived, and to-night he would get even with him, too.

He could do nothing now, for the law of the gang compelled the "gay cat," while on a "finding-lay," to attend strictly to the business in hand, refraining from any act which might attract attention before the trick was turned.

Tippy's hope was that the sound of the explosion of the safe would, as usual, bring the town policeman to the scene, and that this "bum bull" would arrive that night before the gang could make its get-away, in which case he would stand a dazzling show of getting what was coming to him; for the yeggs never surrendered, and would as soon be in a mixup with guns and cops as eat the kind of dinner they usually had to put up with, or sleep in the holes and corners that were their accustomed lot. Blood and bruises and pain were but parts of life, no worse than the rest of it, and they accepted them without fear as without understanding, never whimpering, and doing all the deadly damage possible when attacked. Tippy himself was no fighter; he lacked both the courage and the ability; but his pals! He could safely leave this enemy to them, trusting to the chances that he would be led to the spot in season to meet his billet.

Arrived at the main street he saw that few changes had taken place in its appearance. There was the church looming as gray and forbidding as ever, with its bell, the dolorous sound of which he remembered well; the 'pothecary on the corner; the hardware and general store; the town hall; the "periodical depot" where he had "swiped" molasses taffy and nickel story papers so often; and

there, in a new suit of clothes, stood the bank! Ah! He examined it from a distance. No longer occupying the low wooden building of yore it frowned aristocratically from the center of a new brick block, with glaring striped awnings over all its eyes.

He approached and glanced casually within. He must learn where the safe stood, how it was protected, and if above the cashier's window there hung the sign, "Member American Bankers' Association." Trained to this service, he took in all he wished to know with one seemingly careless glance and jerked onward. Only a flimsy iron network separated the cheap safe from the outer spaces of the room, and the one sign above the main window read, "Cashier." Had the little card hung there, the gang would think twice before operating. The American Bankers' Association is not to be toyed with; it cannot be put off the track for good, once it sets its foot upon it; it is tireless, intelligent, merciless, and always wins. It was, therefore, an unaffiliated bank that Tippy was looking for, and here it was.

He walked a short way down the street, turned into an alley, and passed along behind the bank block through a wide lane. Nothing but a rail fence marked off the back yards from this lane, and he saw that the job was going to be a "dead gay cinch," for there were no dwelling-houses near, the bank window was close enough to the ground to be easily within reach, and the nettings over the glass would offer, to an expert, scarcely more resistance than paper. The block was occupied by offices only, where there would be nobody asleep who might in the night inopportunely awaken; the unkempt appearance of the premises precluded a watchman, and across the lane there was nothing but a huge vacant lot which, evidently used as a cow-pasture and dump for refuse, rolled broadly away and sloped in unsightly hummocks and valleys to the river a quarter of a mile distant. Why, this crib was laid out on purpose to be cracked! He had never seen a more dead sweet plum-pudding.

Throwing a glance of amused contempt at the building, he jerked sturdily

forward to the bridge, where he paused, unslung his pack and, rolling and lighting a cigaret, stood gazing into the waters tumbling and racing rowdily below. His end of the job was finished now, and he might take his ease until night.

Several people passed him as he stood there, but Tippy the Jerk long ago had had it beaten into him by the chiefs with whom he worked that the surest way to attract attention is to meet with your own eyes the gaze of others, while an indifferent or wooden expression of "mug" is the best protection against unwelcome notice; and therefore he did not so much as glance at these pedestrians as they passed. Moreover, though this was his native town and these might be men whom he had known well by sight in the old days, they did not rouse his curiosity now. He did not even look after them when they had passed. The conscious part of his mind was taken up with one thought—revenge, revenge on them all.

Yet above that thought and flitting incongruously about on it in detached patches, like drops of mercury on a plate, was that other, that sweet, holy, vision of the lovely child face with its bright eyes and red lips.

Somehow the two did not go together; the thought and the vision would not mix, and the presence of them both in his mind at the one time was productive, in Tippy, of a singularly helpless state of confusion. Always far from being clear-headed, able at most to hold in his head but one idea at a time, and that only hazily, he now seemed incapable even of that, his mind jumping from one to the other and back again with an incoherence that bewildered him. He saw no relation between the two, did not dream of their antagonism each for the other, knew simply that he was filled with unrest and a sensation of misery. It was not the feeling that he had expected to experience on this day of his revenge, and the reason of it lay beyond his understanding.

On the hill at the west of the bridge was a beautiful house with wide verandas, covered with vines, and towards this he presently found his gaze straying. He

felt irresistibly impelled to watch that house. It seemed to fill the whole western horizon. Some big money-sharp lived there, he had forgotten just who, even if he had ever known, and the place had no conscious interest for him. Yet again and again his eyes returned to it, and when he saw approaching a person whom he felt that he could address, he asked him who lived there. The man was an odd character, of simple mind, whom Tippy remembered well, a job-teamster by occupation. He pulled up as Tippy spoke and looked in the indicated direction.

"That's Shaw's," he answered in a queer, monotonous voice. "He's in the bank—cashier. Married Eldridge's daughter. Eldridge he's the president."

Tippy turned dull eyes toward the house, and the driver, after waiting hopefully for any further questioning, clucked his team onward. A faint hint of the relation of that revenge-thought to the sacred vision was beginning to shape itself in Tippy's mind, and he was considering it to the exclusion of all else. Little by little the hint grew broader. It came at first as a shock that she was Eldridge's daughter, was, indeed, anybody's daughter.

He had seen her only in school or on the way back and forth, always alone or in company with other children, and the fact that she should have a father and mother and home life, like ordinary human beings, had not impressed itself upon him. She was by herself, above the plane of mortals, and it was distinctly distasteful and difficult for him to acknowledge that she had a father, with whom she must always have been on intimate terms. He did finally admit it to himself because he knew it was so, and always had known it, yet now it was too surprising to be thoroughly realized at once.

The consideration of this prepared him in a measure for the next shock. She was grown up and married! That made Tippy feel queer. His head buzzed and whirled; a hard ache came into his throat, a dim questioning glimmered in his eyes. Grown up and married—*she!* He tried to make this astonishing change



"Then it aint all been for nothin'," he whispered joyfully

in her seem right and natural, turning the thought over and over in his mind, looking at it from many sides. His gaze, hungry, pleading, full of an expression that never had been there before in all his life, sought again the distant dwelling. There was where she lived, she actually might appear at any moment, and he could see her! At this thought he moved uneasily. And when suddenly he caught sight of fluttering drapery among the vines on the veranda, he drew his breath sharply, his heart swelled with a pain that was half joy, and feeling blindly for his pack he shouldered it hastily and started for the main street.

As he came to the end of the bridge, where the lane started to run behind the bank building, he stopped suddenly, consternation in full possession of him. Now at last he saw the relation, the relation between the rankling thought of revenge and the sacred vision of the lovely face. It was *her* father, *her* husband, who were the president and cashier of the bank, the robbing of which and its ruin that night by his pals would stand for the consummation of his revenge against the town.

He had not to think long over this, as he had thought over the other links of the logical chain of facts; it came to him suddenly, and the shock of it was greater than that of all the rest together. Why, this could not be! It was impossible. *She* could be in no way connected with such affairs as this; a bank robbery was so far out of her orbit that he could not imagine her as being conscious that such a thing ever existed, yet here was he, doing all that was in him to aid his pals, and then in the morning she would hear of it, and be connected vitally with it, would be right in the midst of it, would be touched, affected, surrounded by it! It would smirch her, *her*! At this thought he smiled vaguely, it was so impossibly absurd, but his legs became weak, nevertheless, and he dropped his pack, sitting down on it quickly, as if exhausted.

But this time he did not sit apathetically, as was his wont. While his hand trembled with the sudden faintness that had seized him, he eagerly pulled up his

trousers leg, and producing a small cotton bag which had been attached to his garter, opened it and hurriedly "skinned" its contents, which were made up of a good-sized packet of bank bills, the leftover meat of the last walnut cracked.

"Six hund'ud 'n' thoirty bones!" he muttered, thrusting the bills into his coat pocket.

He sat a moment looking into space. He must act, but how? He had no initiative. Suddenly, with a blind look in his eyes, but with resolution marking his movements, he kicked his pack into the river and jerked hastily away towards the forest rendezvous.

It was long after dark when he reached there, and the gang was busy "boiling the soup." With a spoon the yegg chief was skimming the white float from the soaking sticks of dynamite and pouring it into bottles, while his three helpers fed the fire with brush and sticks.

They merely looked up as Tippy noiselessly entered the circle of light. Nobody spoke. Speech was dangerous and unnecessary. Acts alone counted.

Tippy approached the chief, a burly young tough with a broken nose and whispered:

"De game is coppered. Here's de poke."

He passed a roll of bills to the yegg who, receiving it without surprise, ran it swiftly over, and then said with both amazement and chagrin:

"W'at, six hun'ud 'n' thoirty—dat de poke in a bank pocket!"

He regarded Tippy in hurt astonishment. He did not suspect him of grafting from the gang, for such a thing had seldom been heard of in their profession. The loyalty of yeggs to their kind is proverbial. Besides, the chief knew Tippy, knew that a move of that sort was not characteristic of him. It was out of his line. Still he scrutinized him queerly. It was a thing next to impossible that a bank, even a little jayhawker bank like this one, should be able to cough up only six hundred and thirty cases.

Tippy returned his chief's regard with a look that nobody ever had seen in his face before, for it was full of purpose,

determined, inflexible, and Tippy's usual expression of countenance was simply fatuous, stupid, inconsequent.

The chief felt the change in him and was curious. He stared at him mutely for a moment, turning over in his mind the probabilities as to what could have happened, and then his eyes were attracted to the bills in his hand. Something he saw there brought his teeth together with a sharp click. A slow color stole into his hard face, and he kept his gaze downward for a long minute, as if to conceal his feelings.

Then he looked up and asked innocently:

"How'd youse come t' sting de poke, Jerk?"

"W'y," Tippy the Jerk answered slowly, "I seen de pocket open, an' de cashier sharp out on de sidewalk muggin' a petticoat in a carriage, so I does de slide act an' makes me get-away, dat's all. Dere's a back door, an' de vamp is dead easy."

The chief appeared to muse, still fingering the bills.

"Dis is a kindergarden clean-up for a bank—six-thoirty," he said presently. "W'y didn't youse bunch onter de rest?"

"Dere wasn't no more—I soaped it clean," Tippy answered.

The chief turned with sudden impatience to the company and held a number of the bills towards them in the light of the fire.

"Guns," he said, "did youse ever flash yer lamps on dese flimsies before?"

They crowded around and after a quick glance answered as with one voice:

"Sure we did!"

The chief looked at Tippy now with hard eyes.

"Dis bunch o' wads," he said, slowly and significantly, "is w'at I shoved t' youse at dump eight off'n de crack at Pitts. Youse had it in yer pantleg. See dis."

He thrust the notes under Tippy's nose and pointed to a small round hole that ran through several of them in the upper right-hand corner.

"Dat is w're a wire nail jumped t'rough dese plasters w'en we busted de pocket at Pitts, de last job we done. De

nail flewed t'rough a -bundle o' fifty, leavin' dis hole, an' I framed it up t' have each of us use ten wid de leak in 'em. Ten is w'at come t' youse, an' here's six o' dat ten right here, in a poke youse say yer pinched off'n dat bank pocket t'day." He paused. Tippy's expression changed not a whit. He was eyeing the master yegg with unflinching determination in his eyes. The chief, wholly at a loss to account for the astonishing change in the former subservient Tippy, or for the presence here of the marked bills, went on speaking, his voice inclining to a mildly argumentative rather than a condemnatory tone:

"Dis don't look noways reasonable, Jerk, an' youse knows it as well as we does. It's nuttin' but a dream. Dis wad never seen dat bank pocket; it belongs t' youse. W'at is youse handin' it out for? Dere's a reason. W'at is it? We is yer pals an' got t' know."

"De 'Sociation sign is on de bank!" Tippy burst out desperately.

He must keep the bunch away from that safe, and he could fish up from the depths of his stagnant mind nothing new, nothing but what had always been there. The thought that he might accomplish his object by betraying the gang and their purpose to the police was as far from occurring to him as it was impossible for him to give his real reason, and he was incapable of understanding the fatuousness of his logic—that even if the sign were there that was no cause for his yielding up his own money.

But the gang saw this, and the words were no sooner free from his lips than he felt that he had failed. Not a man in the company believed him, and every face present plainly indicated not only that disbelief but a ludicrous astonishment as well. The chief held the bills towards him, and then he knew the game was up, that his explanations and offering were refused and resented, and that despite him the safe would be cracked that night.

As this realization rushed in upon him a wild blaze lighted his eyes and his heretofore flaccid body swayed lithely, like a bundle of steel rods. In one light-

ning-like bound, he was among them, hammering into the crowd with a murderous jimmy which he had snatched from where it lay on the ground. The chief was the first to go down, and lay half stunned beside the fire. The others, startled beyond description by this extraordinary onslaught and the terrible rage in Tippy's eyes, sprang away, but in a twinkling he was after them wielding his weapon fiercely. It seemed to their amazed eyes that the strength of a giant nerved his flabby arms and the fury of a fiend transformed his face. This sudden unaccountable metamorphosis of the simple, cowardly Tippy the Jerk into a wild and masterful champion so terrorized them that for the space of a few seconds he drove them before him like frightened sheep.

Then Tippy, making a wild swing with the jimmy, missed his aim and as the violence of the blow spent itself on the air, lost his balance and fell, face downward in the underbrush.

The chief, staggering to his feet, rushed toward the prostrate figure calling hoarsely to his pals. Recovering from their momentary panic, they leaped eagerly forward and a hail-storm of savage kicks and blows descended on the helpless form of the once "gay cat." They desisted only when breathless from their exertions, and stood looking vengeancefully at the motionless figure lying at their feet with its head in a splutter of blood.

The chief was the first to speak:

"He got what was comin' to him, fellers," he said thoughtfully; "but blamed if I know what to make o' de game. It warn't like him to try to double-cross us; it warn't like him to put up such a blind, crazy scrap. Dunno what his lay could 'a' been, 'less he went clean off his nut. Guess that was it, all right. An' now, we better beat it 'way from here. There's nothin' doin' with that there crib now; can't tell who he may have put hep to the crack."

The others nodded assent. There was a mystery about the whole affair that they did not relish, and it would not profit them to waste time trying to solve it. Sulkily they slouched through the

bushes to the road and headed for the railroad, a mile away.

An hour passed before Tippy's eyes opened. With a desperate effort he dragged his battered body to a sitting posture and glanced stupidly around. The yeggs had vanished; there was no sign of a human presence anywhere in the glade. He lay back on the grass again to ponder the situation.

What was the next move his former pals were likely to make? Would they attempt the robbery of the bank, as previously planned, or would they abandon that plan for the present?

He was hurt badly, he knew that; every breath he drew went through him like a knife, and one leg felt as if it were paralyzed. Yet he could not, would not, die, until he had satisfied himself on that point. He must get to the town somehow; he must warn Shaw; perhaps there was yet time. A blind, stubborn rage seized him when, having dragged himself to his feet, his right leg collapsed under him and he fell forward on one knee. His hand touched a dark object on the ground and closed around it in triumph. It was a piece of scantling which had once formed a part of a fence, and with it as a crutch he might manage—somehow.

"Might? There could be no 'might' about it; he *must* reach Shaw's house—crawl there, if necessary. With the scantling under his arm-pit he moved slowly forward toward the road.

Late that night a dusty, blood-stained, ragged wreck of humanity limped wearily up the steps of the Shaw residence, pushed the electric button feebly, and as the strident clamor of the bell broke forth, reeled forward and fell to the threshold in a faint. They carried him inside and administered restoratives, and Tippy's eyes opened to rest upon the faces of the cashier and his wife bending over him. A faint smile flickered across his bruised, distorted features; he would have known her anywhere—the face of the child he remembered, matured now into the full loveliness of the woman—but still the same child's face.

She bent closer, in the attempt to hear

the hoarse whispers that issued from his lips:

"Th' bank," he muttered; "I came to tell youse—they was goin' to crack it to-night, I couldn't git here afore; I—"

He lapsed into unconsciousness again, and Shaw stared at his wife in sudden surprise.

"I don't understand this," he said. "He spoke of the bank; I wonder if—"

He left the room but returned in a few moments. In response to his wife's inquiring look, he shook his head:

"Everything is O. K.," he said. "I telephoned the watchman and he says he just came back from the bank block and everything was quiet."

Shaw's deep voice seemed to arouse Tippy from his stupor, and he smiled again as the cashier's last words fell upon his dulled hearing.

"Then it aint all been for not'in'," he whispered joyfully; "this here's me fin- ish—but I called the turn—" He paused. "She was jes' like a angel," he murmured, "with sunshine in her hair— 'n' gold—"

His voice died away; the door-bell in the hall pealed loudly.

"That must be the doctor at last," said Shaw; "he was out when I telephoned to his house, but they said he wouldn't be long. I hope he can do something for this unfortunate fellow."

But the cashier's hope was not to be realized, which, after all, perhaps, was just as well. For when the physician reached the side of his patient, Tippy the Jerk was lying very still, with a smile of content lingering on his battered face. The travels of the "gay cat" were ended.

Nick Van Voorst—Rescuer

BY HORACE HAZELTINE

Author of "The City of Encounters," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY RALEIGH

A FLAKE of white fluttering out of the overhanging dark, skimmed for an uncertain second before Van Voorst's suddenly attracted glance, pinked him lightly on the cheek with one of its corners, and then settled with a little erratic, darting motion at his feet. It was a small thing to interrupt a gentleman's passage, yet it had that effect. Van Voorst halted, looked down, turned it over with the point of his walking-stick, and ended by picking it up. On closer inspection he found it to be a sheet of letter-paper, such as typewriters use, folded twice at right angles and with one corner turned over. Upon opening it, three typewritten lines were indistinctly evident. A step or two beyond him was a street lamp, and by the aid of this Van Voorst read:

Am a prisoner in Room 717 of Hotel Haricot. If you are a man, rescue me. If a woman, send someone. The night clerk is in the—

Instinctively the young man sought his bearings. He turned now to the building before which he was standing, and from certain generally denotative signs identified it as an apartment hotel, but whether or not the Haricot he was, for the moment at least, unable to determine. The hour was after midnight and the lights on either side of the wide entrance, as well as those within the vestibule, had been extinguished, as is the custom of hotels of the quiet, family type to which this belonged. Therefore, if there chanced to be a name on the globes or on the fan light over the door it was not distinguishable.

Mr. Nicholas Remsen Van Voorst, scion of an old New York family, and club man, with no more exacting business than the care of an inherited fortune, and no more fervid predilection than an ingrained passion for adventure, was not to be baffled, however, by such a wee obstacle. The night being quite still, he argued that the message so fortuitously dropped in his path could not have been carried from afar. It was quite reasonable to suppose, therefore, that it had been cast from one of those upper windows towards which he now raised an inquiring if not expectant gaze.

Though the gloom was punctured neither by pallid beseeching face nor beckoning hand, Van Voorst was not dissuaded, but addressed himself to the double entrance doors, paneled in beveled glass and protected by iron grills. To his pleased surprise he found them unlocked. Thus he gained admission to the square vestibule, the marble floor of which, he discovered, by pedal contact, was protected by a rubber covering. This offered a suggestion. Deliberately he struck a wax vesta. Amid the incised pattern of the mat, a name was revealed. His assumption had been well founded. He was in what might be called the outer court of the Hotel Haricot.

As he passed through the inner doors, which he found conveniently ajar, he rehearsed in mental haste the conclusions he had drawn from the writing which now had place in one of his pockets. Inasmuch as the last sentence of the brief, hurried note was unfinished, it was quite evident that the writer had feared instant interruption, if indeed she had not been, for the moment at least, interrupted. Nevertheless, her intention was very plain. Unconsciously she had merely perpetrated an ellipsis. He understood perfectly that the night clerk was in the—*plot*. That was as clear as if the word had been spelled out in capital letters.

But there was one feature of the happening which was more puzzling. How did it chance that the young lady—he had never doubted from the first that it was a young lady—was able to use a typewriter to convey her need of help?

Prisoners are not ordinarily confined with typewriters for companions. Moreover, the apparent respectability of the hotel had been a distinct surprise. For such an outrage as the note indicated it afforded the most incongruous of settings.

The hall in which Van Voorst now found himself was dimly lighted. Before him was the open door of an empty elevator car in which a single electric bulb of small candle-power gave battle to the dark. On his right, to judge by the polished brass door plate, was a doctor's office. On his left, an archway surmounted a heavy, mahogany desk table. At first glance the space behind this seemed untenanted, but when Van Voorst approached and peered into the shadows, the stooping figure of a man defined itself.

The attitude of the fellow, taken in connection with the surroundings and the implication of the typewritten appeal, convinced the investigator that this, beyond all peradventure, was the night clerk. For just a second he debated his next move. To request to be taken to the seventh floor on which Room 717 was supposedly located—most hotels numbering their rooms after this fashion—would certainly meet with stubborn refusal. Boldly to climb the stairs would with equal certainty invite pursuit and probably ultimate interference. Only one course lay open to him. He must pretend to be a guest—a new one whom the night clerk had not hitherto seen. He would take the elevator to the sixth floor, to avoid suspicion, and then ascend one flight of stairs to the rescue. This plan, too, he realized was fraught with possibilities of failure, since there are few daily arrivals at a hotel of this type, and the clerk, by asking his name and the number of his room, could very readily detect his subterfuge. Were there no chance in the exploit, however, there would be no zest. And so having made his decision, Mr. Nicholas Remsen Van Voorst, with some suavity and infinite aplomb, inquired of the stooping figure as to the whereabouts of the elevator boy.

At his words the figure instantly resumed the upright, and coming within

radius of the meager light, stood revealed as a young man, not unattractive in appearance, but palpably agitated.

"W-what did you say?" he asked.

"I wish to be taken to my room," Van Voorst explained, with growing confidence. "And the elevator boy has disappeared."

The young man's loss of composure was but temporary. Alertly he stepped forth from the alcove's side entrance and with an "I'll take you up, sir," waved an inviting hand toward the ill-lighted car.

The celerity with which he recovered his self-possession was, in Van Voorst's eyes, only another evidence of craft. Here, he believed, he had a most clever young villain to deal with, and as the car mounted somewhat leisurely from story to story, he set his wits to work to evolve some plan by which he could effectually eliminate him from the equation.

What followed was so quickly evolved and so promptly executed that the adventurous club man scarcely realized its possibility until it was accomplished. As the sixth floor was neared, Van Voorst, without warning, laid violent hands upon the night clerk's shoulders, jerking him suddenly backward, and flinging him with such force into a rear corner that he crumpled a limp bundle to the floor. Synchronously the

controller was seized, the car stopped and the gate thrown open. But as Van Voorst stepped out upon the landing, the elevator shot upward again as if propelled by the furies. At the instant of alighting he had thrown on the full power, and as a consequence, four stories up, the safety grips, released by the unusual speed, clutched and held; and be-

tween floor and roof, half unconscious, the plotting night clerk was a prisoner.

Well pleased with his success thus far, Van Voorst now hastened up one flight of stairs, took one more reassuring glance at the suspended car, and turning down the nearest passageway, scanned eagerly the nick-eled numbers on the room doors. His supposition as to the location of the seven hundreds was correct. On his left were the even numbers, on his right the odd. But to his confusion, they did not run in sequence. However, 717 was soon found, and before it, he paused, listening. From within came the

sound of voices—a man's voice; loud, rough and threatening; a woman's voice, low, sweet, and pleading.

For only a moment he stood. Then his hand was on the knob, turning. The door, of course, was locked. He expected that. But at the slight noise he made, the voices ceased. For a heart-beat or two there was silence. Then he began beating the door with his fist. He would soon discover



"Am a prisoner in room 717"

why this woman was held here against her will. As the echo of his blows died away, footsteps were heard approaching from within. The next instant the door was swung ajar, and in the opening stood a medium-sized, smooth-shaven, round-faced, sandy-haired man, in his shirt sleeves. And at his appearance, Van Voorst stared in dumb surprise, his intended upbraiding dead on his tongue. But the man in the doorway was less taken aback.

"Hello, old chap!" he cried, in genial welcome. "Glad to see you! Come in! The missus and I are just going to have a rarebit."

It was Joe Purviance, playwright, song writer, character actor. Van Voorst had met him two summers ago in the smoking-room of a transatlantic liner; had liked him for his frank good-nature and true Bohemian spirit, and had continued the acquaintance in a desultory way ever since.

"But, I—I—" Van Voorst stammered.

And even as he did so, the truth flashed across his slowly recovered senses. Of course, that was it. Joe and his wife were rehearsing. He remembered having seen in the newspapers that they were going into vaudeville. Could it be possible that the note—that silent cry for succor—was a "property" note, drawn through the window by a whimsical chance draught and deposited at his feet by jocose fortune?

"Don't think I'm quite bereft of reason, my boy," he hastened to explain. "You see, I had no more idea of finding you here, than I had of finding the Sultan of Zanzibar or the Ahkoond of Swat. I'm here on a sort of rescue mission. I picked this up outside, in the street, five minutes ago."

And having extracted the note from his inner pocket he spread it out and handed it to the actor to read.

"By George!" exclaimed that versatile gentleman, as his eyes ran over the three lines. "By George! This is interesting. In 717, eh? Why that must be the second apartment from this. Of course it is, just—"

But Van Voorst interrupted him:

"Don't you know," he asked, "that

you're standing in the doorway of 717 at this minute?"

Purviance wondered whether his swagger acquaintance had been bereft of his sight or his sanity since he last met him.

"Don't you suppose I know the number of my own rooms?" he queried, with a tolerant smile. It is well to humor demented persons, he remembered. "I'm standing, my dear fellow, in the door of 721. Look for yourself!"

And drawing the door forward he lifted a pointing finger to the nicked numerals. But as his eyes followed the finger, his hand dropped, and he turned a mystified face towards his exultant caller.

"By Gad!" he muttered in broken-voiced astonishment. "That's singular! I know this is 721. How in Heaven's name did that 717 get there? My dear old chap, I beg your pardon! There certainly is a mystery here."

At the word "mystery," Mrs. Purviance, a plump, girlish little body with blondined tresses, and wearing a large gay-patterned kimono, appeared at her husband's side. It was evident that she had been listening.

Van Voorst had never met her, but both her husband and herself were too much interested now to think of such a trifling matter as an introduction.

She quietly took the note from Purviance's fingers and read it with wide, avid eyes.

"It is quite evident to me," Van Voorst was saying, "that these wary conspirators, fearing, and possibly knowing, that the young lady had cast that note adrift, exchanged the numbers to throw any would-be rescuer off the track. When we find the door marked '721' we shall find the prison."

He started off, without further ado, and the Purviances followed. Half way down the passage, the number stared at them in seeming innocence. Unhesitatingly, Van Voorst threw himself upon the door, turning the knob as he did so. To his surprise it yielded without opposition. He had taken for granted that it would be locked, and the force of his assault landed him, unceremoniously,

well toward the center of a lighted room, and almost atop of a party of four young gentlemen gathered about a card-strewn table, from which rose a veritable circular mountain chain of celluloid poker chips of various colors and heights.

Had Mr. Nicholas Remsen Van Voorst permitted himself on occasions to give way to embarrassment, the time was now ripe. But his poise was ever superb. At the Purviance door, the appearance of a friend where he had looked for an enemy, had for a moment deterred his speech, but left his composure untouched. Here his powers of expression were not invaded.

Before a voice could be raised in resentment at his intrusion, he was making his demand.

"You will release at once," he said, imperatively, "the young woman you here hold captive."

A tall, slim, young man, astride whose nose set a pair of dark, shell-rimmed glasses, was the first to rise from his chair.

He confronted Van Voorst with an amused smile.

"What's this?" he asked. "A new game? If so, you'll have to teach us. We don't know the answer."

But by now, Purviance came to the rescue. He laid a restraining hand on Van Voorst's shoulder and smiled recognition at the youth with the glasses.

"No, no," he soothed, "you're in wrong again, old chap. These boys are all right. They're friends of mine. They'd as soon sign a temperance pledge for life as make a girl prisoner against her will; and if you knew them as I do, you would appreciate the force of that simile, better, perhaps."

Van Voorst reluctantly accepted Purviance's assurance.

"But the room number?" he protested.

Purviance turned to his friends.

"What's the number of this apartment, boys?" he asked.

"719," was the answer.

"How did 721 get on the door, do you suppose?" he pursued.

"Oh, come!" some one shouted. "What



The stooping figure of a man defined itself

are you doing, anyhow, Joe? If you and your friend want to get in the game, it's all right. You needn't write a new play to pave the way."

But Purviance was dragging the tall, slim, studious-looking young man, whose name was Dorsett, doorwards.

"Look what it's marked!" he commanded.

Dorsett looked, but showed no surprise.

"Some of your unhumorous comedy, eh?" he queried, gravely.

Then Mrs. Purviance, who had been waiting in the passage, came forward with the note and told the story; and the other three, at the sound of her voice, joined the group, and everyone became suddenly animated, not to say excited, and Van Voorst was appealed to for more particulars.

"The question now," he observed, ignoring the appeals, "is to find the room upon which the number 719 has been placed."

Someone remarked something about an endless chain, but if Van Voorst heard it, he gave no sign, leading the way, in silence, further down the passage, followed by the chattering company he had gathered in his quest.

When Room 719 was found, however, a still greater surprise was there; for the door was open, and the number was discovered only by entering the room and swinging the door about until the light from the passage revealed it. If this room ever had another number originally there was no one there to tell the tale, and so it looked very much as if the line of search had come to an abrupt conclusion.

"The whole thing's a practical joke," cried Dorsett, with a laugh. "That's clear enough. Fancy anyone writing an appeal for release on a typewriter! A girl shut up in a room would be more likely to write with the burnt end of a match on a piece of loose wall paper. Of course it's a joke, and I can't see how anyone could take it seriously from the first. Come on boys, the game's waiting!"

And he started back for the deserted poker-table, followed by his gibing companions. "It does look a bit fishy, doesn't it, old Chap?" Purviance asked.

"If it's a practical joke," returned Van Voorst, quietly, "I'd like to find the fellow that played it, that's all."

They stood for a moment talking before Purviance's door. The actor and his wife were trying to prevail upon him to join their little Welsh rarebit party. But Van Voorst, disgruntled at the turn of events, politely, yet firmly declined.

At that moment an elderly couple, short-breathed and muttering over being compelled to climb six flights of stairs, dragged wearily down the passage, and unlocking a door on the opposite side, went in.

"Sorry you wont stop," Purviance flung, as Van Voorst, with a "Good-night, Mrs. Purviance; good-night, dear boy," turned towards the stairs.

It was a sorry ending to what had promised to be an adventurous, possibly hazardous, exploit, and the young clubman, disappointed and chagrined, dug his hands deep in his pockets and was about to begin the long descent to the ground floor, when recollection of the imprisoned, yet probably innocent night-clerk, brought him suddenly to a halt.

But was the night clerk innocent? If so, why had he not made an outcry? Why was he not, even now, clamoring for release? The slight push given him could not have had any serious result. Under the circumstances his silence was most suspicious.

With new resolution Van Voorst turned about. If the numbers on three rooms had been changed, might they not have been changed on others? What about this room, before which he had paused? It bore the number 715, yet it was six doors away from that of the Purviances; and he knew that to have been originally numbered 721. Undoubtedly the numerals had been tampered with here as well as elsewhere.

As he drew nearer he detected certain muffled sounds which seemed to come from within. With strained ears he listened. The sounds were repeated. They were like a faint, far-away hammering, alternated with what he took to be stifled cries.

He tried the door. It was locked. Once more he listened; his ear, this time

pressed close to the paneling. Unmistakably that which he sought was here. The cries, almost inaudible though they were, were cries of distress. The hammering, weak though it was, was insistent.

Impulsively he cast his weight against the door, with such force that it strained and shuddered, though it did not give way. He retreated to the opposite side of the passage, and then lunged heavily once more upon this none-too-frail object of assault. With a report like a repeating rifle it splintered, split, and fell inward, with only a narrow, jagged strip, left swaying from the hinges.

The room thus crudely opened was in darkness; but, finding an electric switch after a moment's quick search, Van Voorst flooded it with light. And the first object on which his sight rested was a typewriter.

More convincing even than the sounds was this mute piece of evidence, resting there on the slight little Louis XVI table, over against a window. But the room offered no further revelation. It was a tiny parlor, a *bijou* in decoration and furnishing, well ordered and tenantless. Silence followed upon the crash as the riven door was unbroken. The muffled hammering and stifled cries had ceased. But there ensued almost instantly a combination of noises from out in the passage. Room doors were opening; questions were being hoarsely asked and whisperingly answered; hurrying feet padded in dull rhythm over the heavy carpets.

Hastily Van Voorst parted the *portières* which screened the bedchamber. And as he did so, distinctly enough now, he heard hammering, rebegun. It came from a closet on the far side of the room. The cries, too, were resumed. The one word, "Help!" was being iterated and reiterated in a high-pitched voice.

"Yes, yes," he responded, consolingly. "I hear you. I'll have you out in a minute."

He turned on an overhead electric; and then, failing to find a key in the closet door, cast a hasty, searching glance about the room, with no result. To force the door without injury to the closet's oc-

cupant would be of necessity a delicate matter. It were better, perhaps, to wait until he could procure keys from the other tenants, and try them.

But at this juncture his foot struck upon something. The key, jolted from the lock, probably by the incessant hammering of the prisoner, had fallen to the floor. Just an instant more, and he had inserted it, turned it, and flung wide the closet door.

To his astonishment a young man, pale and trembling, stepped out—an undersized, narrow-shouldered, fair-haired youth, scarcely more than a boy, breathing hard and on the verge of panic.

At the same moment there was an excited invasion of the adjoining parlor.

"We have been robbed," Van Voorst heard some one say. "My wife's jewels have been taken. We were at the theatre. When we came home, we found our bureau drawers rifled."

The released prisoner, without pausing to thank his rescuer, started for the door; but Van Voorst dropped a heavy, detaining hand upon his shoulder.

"You'll have to explain," he told him.

And, still gripping him firmly, he pushed him ahead of him, between the draperies, into the little parlor now crowded with alarmed and curious guests.

Instantly there was a surprised cry, in chorus:

"George!"

It was evident that the youth was well known. They surrounded him, pelting him with questions; and in the midst of the babel, an elderly man, the same that had complained of being forced to climb six flights, pointed at Van Voorst an accusing finger.

"There!" he shouted, in excess of agitation. "There! Who is that? Can't you see, without waiting for George to answer? He is the thief. It is he who has taken my wife's jewelry. George traced him to this room; broke down the door, and has now dragged him out here to face us. Someone telephone for the police at once!"

It was so funny that Van Voorst laughed. The idea of this puny little fellow breaking down the door was ridiculous enough in itself; but that George

could have dragged him, a comparative giant in bulk, was so inconceivable that the humor of it must be apparent to anyone of clear understanding. And it was; for the chorus of laughter was joined with his own.

Purviance, chuckling, came to his side.

"Behold your maiden in distress!" he snickered.

And then both paused to listen, for George, his equilibrium recovered, was telling his story.

"Oh, it was just terrible," he was saying, in a small, effeminate voice. "I never in all my life had such an experience. You see, when I came on at nine o'clock, Henry, the day clerk, told me that he had let an apartment on the seventh floor, just for the evening, to a gentleman who had some correspondence to attend to. At the

gentleman's request—or by his direction, really, for he gave the name and address—Henry procured a young woman stenographer for him. She brought her typewriter with her, and they were still in the apartment. About ten o'clock I sent John, the engineer, to that floor, to change the numbers on the doors."

Van Voorst and Purviance exchanged glances, and someone said questioningly: "Change the numbers?"

"Yes. You see, superstitious persons objected to renting 713, so we arranged to cut that number out, altogether, and—"

"I see," was the response, "go ahead with your story, George."

"Well, at eleven, I came up to see how John was getting on, and I thought I'd stop and ask how much longer the gentleman was going to remain in here. I shall never forget the shock I had when, having opened the door, I came in, at his invitation. I didn't see him until I was quite in the room, for he stood back out of sight, asking who it was. Then, as soon as I had crossed the threshold, he closed the door behind me, and I got a look at him. He wore a hideous black mask. I was that scared my knees shook under me. And before I could say a word he had rushed me into the bedroom, opened the closet, pushed me inside, and locked me fast. I thought I'd die of fright! After a while, though, I began to scream and to pound, but no one answered, and I had nearly given up hope when this gentleman let me out."

Van Voorst turned to Purviance, confused and puzzled.

"Is it possible," he asked, convinced, yet unbelieving, "that this young fellow is the night-clerk?"

"Sure," was the emphatic answer.

"But I thought—the note certainly said: 'The night clerk is in the—'"

"Right, old chap!" Purviance interrupted. "'The night clerk is in the closet.' That is what it meant."

"Then the fellow I have—" Van Voorst began.

But a scream cut short his words.

Everybody for an instant, was silent.

"It came from the bedroom," suggested the first to find voice.



A young man stepped out



"You will release at once the young woman you hold captive"

But before the words were spoken, Van Voorst had plunged between the *portières*. Beside the open closet door was another door, closed, but with the key in the lock. This, even as the rest of the company burst into the bed-chamber, he threw wide, releasing a young woman who faced the light with blinking eyes. Pretty and slight she was, with dark hair, parted in the middle, pale cheeks, and very red lips.

"The stenographer!" gasped George, in amaze. "He locked her up, too."

"Indeed he did, the ruffian!" she exclaimed, excitedly. "He didn't dare to let me go. I should have followed him, and turned him over to the first policeman I met. From seven o'clock until after eleven he had me writing Black Hand letters; and he, all the time with that awful mask on. My fingers trembled so I could scarcely strike the keys."

"Lucky you threw that note out of the

window," Van Voorst observed. "How did you manage that?"

"I wrote it while he was putting the night clerk in the closet," she answered. "Whoever found it was a long while coming," she added; and then ran on: "I was so tired out with the nervous strain that I think I must have fainted from exhaustion after I heard the key turn on me. How many hours have I been in there, anyhow?"

"It is now twenty-five minutes of one," replied Van Voorst, looking at his watch.

"Yes, and the masked Black Hand conspirator, after rifling my wife's jewel box, has got clean away, of course," grumbled the elderly gentleman. "Heaven knows how many more rooms he robbed. Haven't any of you missed anything?"

But before anyone could answer, Van Voorst claimed the company's attention.

"Pardon me," he said, quietly, "but I think our friend is wrong. Unless I am much in error the accused is not very far away and quite secure."

A bombardment of inquiries was now directed upon this tall, good looking young man, whose immaculate evening-dress was in conspicuous contrast with the negligee of most of the others:

"Where?" "What do you know about it?" "Who secured him?" "Why didn't you speak before?"

"Have any of you observed the present location of the elevator car?" was Van Voorst's Socratic rejoinder. "No. Well, if you care to look, you will find it stuck in the shaft, half-way between the ninth floor and the roof. Inside the car, unless I am grossly mistaken, you will discover the intruder."

There was an instant stampede, the elderly gentleman leading. Van Voorst and the young woman followed at leisure.

"That was very clever of you," she whispered, when the clustered pursuers were out of ear-shot.

"Which?" asked Van Voorst, laconically.

"Sending them all upstairs on a wild goose chase, like that."

"You think so?"

"Of course I do. Now you and I can slip quietly out, and—Oh, would you mind fetching my machine? I'll need it, you know, to write my part of the story."

Vainly the young man strove to interpret her observations. To acquiesce and await further developments seemed therefore the wisest course to pursue; so he obediently snuggled the typewriter under his arm, and followed the young woman into the passage.

"We haven't very much time, have we?" she went on, quickening her steps. "You write about picking up the note, and breaking down the door and finding the night clerk, and I'll put my stuff in the form of an interview. I can use my own name and address for that, can't I? Or do you think the other papers would get on to it, and see that the whole thing was a plant? Probably I'd better use my married sister's name, eh?"

The problem was clearing. She was a

newspaper woman. She fancied Van Voorst a fellow reporter. The entire business had been pre-arranged.

"Yes, yes," he agreed. "Use your married sister's name, by all means."

They had nearly reached the head of the stairs when she said:

"I thought Dick was going to send Eddie Long over. You're the new man, aren't you?"

"Yes. I'm new," he admitted.

"Dick got a corking Sunday feature," she continued. "He's going to prove, you know, just how easy it is to rob hotel rooms while the guests are at dinner and the theatre. Did he show you the jewelry? It's to be photographed for illustrations, and then returned with a copy of the paper. It was Dick's own idea, you know. He suggested it to Crabshaw, the Sunday-editor."

"Clever of Dick," commented Van Voorst, with a grin. "Almost clever enough to have succeeded."

She raised startled eyes to his.

"What do you mean?" she cried in alarm. "Aren't you from Dick? Didn't he give you that note? Or—Oh, I see it now, the first note I wrote blew out of the window after I had folded it. You found that, and you thought it was all real, didn't you?"

"I certainly did," he answered. "And part of it is. Listen! They've got Dick, all right."

From above came to them the roar of the avenging mob.

"I met him as I came in, and to keep him safe, shot him to the roof in the elevator. I thought he was the night clerk, and your note said the night clerk was in something which I fancied to be 'the plot.' It was a mistake not to have finished that note," he added.

She stood, pale and trembling, as they brought the young man down; she was so pale and so unnerved that Van Voorst's sympathy went out to her.

"Don't worry," he whispered. "I'll fix it, in some way."

"But the jewels," she murmured. "They'll find them on him. They'll arrest him."

"Be still and do as I tell you," he shot at her, and then advanced to meet the



A young woman faced the light with blinking eyes

descending brave ones and their prisoner.

"Thank you, gentleman," he said, and laid hold of the reporter's shoulder. "I hope you got him out of his cage without difficulty."

Then, turning to the night clerk:

"Run down and get me a taxicab, George. I'm going to make this arrest, unaided, except by this young lady, who will go with me to the police station, to prefer a charge against the ruffian."

"But my wife's jewels!" cried the elderly gentleman. "He has them in his pockets. I am sure he has them."

"He will be searched at the proper time by the proper authorities," was Van Voorst's response.

When the party reached the ground floor, whither the night clerk had preceded them, it occurred to Van Voorst that he had first seen this youth back of the table in the office. Possibly he had hidden his loot there, temporarily. He remembered he had been bending over what seemed in the shadows to be a medium-sized satchel. So, on the chance, he turned the young man and the typewriter over to the custody of Purviance for the moment, and went in search of the bag, which he promptly found and brought forth.

Pretending that it was his own, he carried it out to the taxicab which now waited at the door, and in another moment, he and his captives were whirling away towards Broadway, while the hotel folk, half-stunned by the speed of the denouement, stood staring silently after the disappearing vehicle.

"Now, Dick," said Van Voorst, when the taxicab had struck its pace, "if you'll tell me which of the yellow journals it is that you and the young lady are connected with, I'll drop you there."

Then, for the first time since coming again into his company, the youth, who had all the while seemed strangely ill at ease, found voice.

"What is that, sir?" he asked. "Yellow journal? I know nothing of yellow journals, sir."

Van Voorst observed now that his accent was distinctly British.

"Oh, maybe not," he returned. "But from the character of the work you're en-

gaged in I should call your paper the chromiest sort of yellow."

And then he heard the girl at his side giggle.

"My paper!" repeated the young man. "I have no paper, sir. I am a valet, sir; a visiting valet."

"A what?" roared Mr. Nicholas Remsen Van Voorst, in profound amazement.

"A visiting valet, sir. If you will look in the bag at your feet, sir, you will find five waistcoats, for Mr. Tomlinson, of the Hotel Haricot. I promised them to him before seven, to-morrow, sir. I worked, cleaning and pressing them all last evening, and had just brought them in, sir, when you requested me to run the elevator for you, and gave me a most unmerciful pummeling for my trouble, not to speak of frightening me half-silly by sending the car at full speed to the roof."

The club man listened in dazed astonishment.

"But—but—" he stammered; and then he turned to the young woman. "Why, in heaven's name," he demanded, "didn't you tell me this wasn't your newspaper co-conspirator? You certainly knew I thought him to be."

"You told me to keep still and do as you told me," she laughed back. "Oh, I'm so glad Dick got away!"

Then he turned back to the valet.

"And you!" he exclaimed. "Why didn't you tell those men at the hotel who you were? Don't you know George, the night clerk?"

"I tried to tell them, sir, but they wouldn't listen. I'd never been in at night before, and never saw the clerk."

"A fine comedy of errors," Van Voorst mused.

And then, democratically:

"What do you two say to having supper with me? The adventure's given me an appetite."

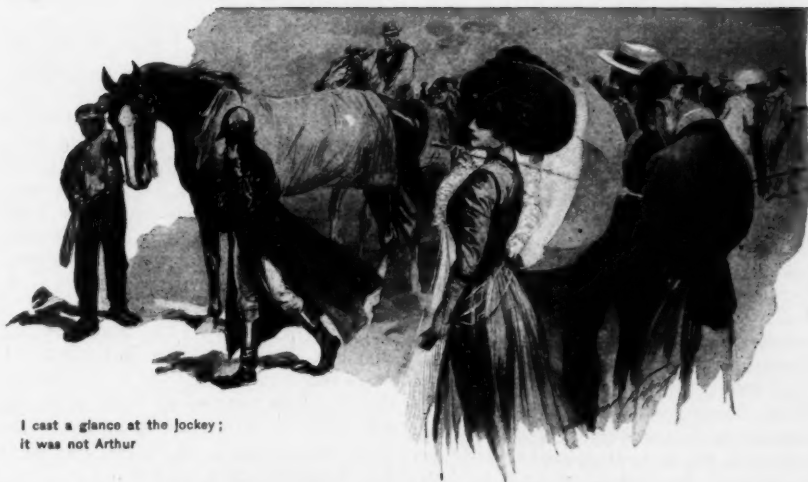
"But my story," objected the girl.

"That will keep," he told her.

"Mr. Tomlinson's waistcoats," objected the valet.

"I'll have them sent by messenger," Van Voorst agreed.

And then he told the taxicab driver to take them to Jack's.



I cast a glance at the jockey;
it was not Arthur

The "Society End"

BY BLAKE STEVENS

ILLUSTRATED BY EDMUND FREDERICK

(See cover and frontispiece)

HARD luck surely claimed me for its own. I was jolted financially, and jilted in love.

It was not so much that Dad should have gone broke, trying to corner the wheat market. That had happened before—he is known as "Plunger" Walton out West—and I had little doubt but that he would roll up another fortune before I had really got used to doing without the services of a maid.

Neither, for that matter, was I breaking my heart over the defection of Arthur Gammon—or, at least, I told myself I wasn't. If he were the sort of pusillanimous hypocrite who wanted to marry me solely for my money, wasn't I better off without him? And what other meaning could be read into that telegram I received from him on top of the one containing the disastrous news from father?

Please release me from my engagement. Our arrangement impossible in view of conditions here.

That was the chivalric and considerate fashion in which he gave me to understand that all was over between us!

Release him? Don't imagine that I wasted much time in doing it. I dashed off a letter just about three lines long; and although it cost me a pretty stiff wrench at the heart, I took off his ring, packed it in a little box and saw that both were mailed before I went to bed.

True, I cried a little that night, burying my head in the pillows so as not to be overheard; for despite what ill-natured people have said, it was not Arthur's social position which led me to accept him, but because I really loved him. So, naturally it made me feel bad to discover his true caliber.

Nevertheless, I did not falter in my determination. First thing in the morning, when I wired Father of our return, I told him to spread the news broadcast.

Mother and I were in New York for the purpose of getting my trousseau; but, since there was to be no wedding, I

realized that the best thing we could do was to go home and face the music—pretend not to care, and so head off the gossips from all the nasty things they would otherwise be saying about me.

It was decided that Mother should leave at once, while I was not to start until the next day. There were some bills to be paid, and several things to be looked after, which as usual had been left till the last minute.

With so little time at my command, therefore, and with my packing still to do, I put in, as may be imagined, a rather strenuous morning. Indeed, when I ran into Amy Brooks, my old Vassar room-mate, down on Twenty-third street, about noon, I was completely done up, and consequently interposed no objection, when she suggested that we go somewhere for luncheon, and have a bit of chat over old times.

Ensconced, then, in one of those cunning, little tea-rooms so dear to the feminine heart, we waxed confidential over our tea and salad, and it was not long before we were pouring out all our troubles to each other, just as we used to in our undergraduate days at Poughkeepsie.

Amy's hat was a dream, I noticed, and her gown something to rave over; and I wondered slightly at it, as well as at her air of keen alertness. A very different Amy she was from the lackadaisical, somewhat frumpish girl I had known at school.

The mystery was explained, however, when she told me that she was now a full-fledged newspaper woman, commanding a good salary, and covering the "Society end," as she called it, for the *New York Daily Saffron*.

"Hence these clothes," she smiled, glancing down at her modish attire. "When one may be called at any moment to drop in on a tea, a luncheon, or some other function, one must keep looking eternally fit."

She appeared so bright, and capable, and free-from-care, that I could not restrain a touch of envy.

"Ah," I sighed, "it must be delightful to be so independent. I shall have to go back to made-over gowns and petty

economies now, I suppose, until Dad is able to get on his feet again."

"You?" she cried. "Why, I had an idea that your future was all arranged. Let's see, wasn't it only a month or two ago that I announced your approaching marriage to a scion of your ultra aristocracy—a leader in the swell athletic set, and all that sort of thing? 'The family fortunes of the Gammons have been somewhat on the decline,' I remember saying, 'but what of that? 'Plunger' Walton's daughter will have more than enough for two.'"

"Oh, forgive me, my dear," seeing that my lower lip was quivering. "I don't really mean it. That is just one of the malicious touches we have to put in our stuff to give it a sprightly tinge. Your young man is, of course, all that is fine, and honorable, and—"

"But that is just the trouble," I broke in dejectedly, "he isn't!"

Then I told her all my story—how Father had been put "under the rule," or whatever it is they call it, on the Board of Trade, and about Arthur's telegram, and all the rest of it.

"And now I've got to go back home, when I'd rather die," I wailed. "Just think of my position there, Amy, with everybody knowing that I have been jilted, and grining at me!"

Amy was always a sympathetic creature, and now a sudden flash of inspiration came to her eye.

"Why *should* you go back?" she asked quickly. "Let me tell you something. The racing season opens at Saratoga Monday, and I have been assigned to the Society-end of it. Why not come with me as my assistant? I really need one, for the work is too heavy for one person, but the difficulty hitherto has been to get hold of a suitable woman."

"Oh, I couldn't," I drew back. "I've had no experience at anything of that sort."

"Piffle!" she scoffed. "You can write, I know—from some of the things you used to do for the college paper—and the rest of it is merely a matter of exercising ordinary tact, and keeping your eyes open. Listen to me, you will see how easy it is."

And she rattled off into an account of some of her own adventures which were calculated to reassure my doubts, and at the same time fire my emulation.

In the end, she overbore all my objections, and carried me off downtown to her office on Park Row, where after an interview with the editor, for which she properly coached me, I was duly taken on, furnished with transportation, and ordered to accompany Amy that evening to Saratoga.

I had taken the plunge, but I still entertained enough apprehension as to my success not to boast until I was sure that I could make good. So I took absolutely no one into the secret of my new enterprise, and wired home only that I had delayed my return in order to visit an old school-friend.

I had insisted, too, upon being presented to the editor as "Miss Chase"—my full name is Marjorie Chase Walton—and under that convenient *soubriquet*, I was determined for the present to shroud my real identity.

For a week, everything went swimmingly. All I had to do was to follow Amy's directions, and as the weather was perfect, the big hotels at the Spa animated and gay, and the race track whither we repaired each afternoon a veritable dressmakers' show, I had, with the novelty and excitement of my work, one of the rippingest times of my life.

Then came a sudden interruption. Amy was unexpectedly called off to report a big garden fête at Newport, and would have to be absent for three days.

"Do you think you can handle matters here all alone?" she questioned, dubiously. "I don't want to call on the Office for help, when they have already given me an assistant, but if you are afraid—"

"Pooh!" I rejoined with rash self-confidence. "I'll manage all right. Never fret about me, but go on to Newport and enjoy yourself. I'll guarantee you that nothing at this end of the line gets away from us."

She still hesitated, I could see, but in the end my persuasions and her own desire not to appeal to the Office overruled her better judgment, and with many in-

junctions to me as to what I must and must not do, she took her departure.

"Keep your eye on the Dauvray-Lord Sackett affair," was the last thing she said to me, as she started for the train. "Of course, no startling developments are to be expected now that they are finally engaged, but you mustn't neglect to send down at least half a column about them every day—what they have for breakfast, and his lover-like attentions, and how many times she changes her frock, and that sort of guff, you know."

My callow self-sufficiency resented so unnecessary a caution. Why, a baby in arms could hardly fail to recognize the importance of Marian Dauvray and her betrothal as newspaper material. For weeks, the pursuit of the dashing, little Texas widow by her handsome English suitor—a god-son and especial favorite of King Edward himself—had figured as a front-page feature; and not even the news of its favorable outcome had served to dampen public interest in the couple's movements.

They were now in Saratoga, where Mrs. Dauvray's stable had entries in most of the important events of the meeting; and even had I been likely to forget my duty in regard to them, I could scarcely have helped being recalled to it by the buzz of comment and craning of necks which greeted the pair on their every appearance.

However, I realized that Amy's admonition was meant in good part, so, merely assuring her again that she might trust absolutely to my vigilance, I pushed her into her waiting cab, and took up my vicegerency.

My! How I did hustle that day! Keyed up by the weight of responsibility resting on my shoulders, I labored like a very galley slave.

It happened to be a big afternoon at the track—the occasion of the Sportsmen's Steeplechase with gentlemen riders up—and the devotees of fashion were out in full force. They went fairly wild, too, when Mrs. Dauvray's "Beauty Bright," piloted by a jockey whom nobody seemed to know, came in as the winner.

"She told me herself last week that Gammon had promised to come on and ride for her," said a man behind me in puzzled tones, "yet that is certainly not he."

I cast a quick glance at the jockey who, enveloped in a long dust-coat, was hurrying back to the paddock after being weighed in. No, it certainly was not Arthur, and through Arthur's interest in steeplechasing I had come to know by sight most of the amateur riders of the West.

Moreover, since he was not Arthur, the matter of his identity was of small interest to me. That was a subject for the regular race-reporters to handle. I plunged back into the whirl of my work, and was soon busy once more taking notes of costumes and circulating around the club-house to catch any stray bits of gossip which might be afloat.

And so satisfied was I with results in the shape of the big roll of copy I handed to the telegraph operator that evening for transmission, that I retired to bed with a congratulatory belief that Amy Brooks herself could have done no better.

What a different awakening, though, was mine in the morning! Arising late, I did not take the trouble to read the papers at breakfast, but hurriedly finishing my eggs and coffee, gathered up an armful of them and repaired to the hotel piazza to gloat at my leisure over the way I must have eclipsed my competitors.

But as I emerged upon the veranda, a sudden chill swept over my vaunting spirit. Everybody was reading, and the air seemed surcharged with an electric excitement. But it was not my paper they were reading. That, in every case, had been cast contemptuously aside, while the heading of the *Circle*, our hated rival, loomed largely in evidence.

Neither was it the sporting pages upon which the eyes of that horse-loving crowd were centered. For once, the "dope," and the gossip from stable and paddock were forgotten. The "society column" it was which engrossed men and women alike.

Beset with all sorts of vague alarms, I sank into the nearest chair and hastily skimmed through my sheaf of journals.

Ah, here was what I sought! One of the raciest, spiciest scandals which had set Saratoga agog in years. Every paper had it—every paper except mine. I had been ignominiously "scooped." This was the climax of my hard luck, the last drop in the cup of misfortune which had been lifted to my lips.

Outside on the shaven lawns of the hotel the fountains played and the flowers bloomed in the sunlight; the gay, good-natured throngs of pleasure-seekers promenaded by underneath the elms; but to my eyes, blinded by tears, the charming scene had suddenly become a howling desert full of withered hopes and blighted aspirations.

For I had failed!

Yes, as I have said, every paper except mine had the sensation, although in some it was alluded to only guardedly and with a certain glossing over of the circumstances. But the *Circle* had come out with flaunting headlines, and a bold statement of the case, omitting no single detail, and leaving nothing to the imagination.

From this I learned for the first time that the engagement of which all the world was talking, had been broken. There was a decisive rupture between Mrs. Dauvray and her titled lover.

Lord Sackett, it appeared, was of an extremely jealous disposition, and when a few days before he had accidentally come into possession of a telegram addressed to the lovely widow, and containing protestations of the most ardent and undying affection, he had naturally waxed a trifle inquisitive.

She had put him off, however, with the assertion that the message was just a lot of nonsense from an old friend, one of the noted amateur riders of the West, and meant no more than an acceptance of the mount on "Beauty Bright" with whom she was set upon winning the forthcoming Sportsmen's Steeplechase.

Still Sackett was far from being wholly satisfied, and when the rider in question did not turn up on the day of the race, but another jockey did who was

conjectured rival able to pilot "Beauty Bright" to victory, he promptly concluded that this second jockey was really none other than his masquerading under a false name.

His suspicions heightened, moreover, by the fact that the chap did not return to the paddock, but hopping into a closed carriage, left the track immediately after the race. The Englishman had lost no time in following, and had succeeded in trailing the man so closely that with his own eyes he saw him enter Mrs. Dauvray's apartments at the hotel, the lady herself having remained at home that afternoon, despite her interest in the event, on the plea of a headache.

Convinced now of his betrothed's perfidy, Sackett rushed forward and likewise demanded admittance; but when the door was opened, after some slight delay, nothing of the jockey was to be seen. He had either fled by the window, or else was so cunningly concealed that no trace of him was visible.

A stormy scene ensued, but as Mrs. Dauvray steadfastly declined to offer any defense or explanation, Lord Sackett had felt that the only thing left for him was to break their troth.

Both of them had refused to be interviewed, the report continued, and it seemed also impossible to discover anything in regard to the unknown jockey who had figured in the case, beyond the



Everybody was reading and the air seemed surcharged with excitement

fact that he had ridden under the name of "Mark Dorsett," and that Mrs. Dauvray had guaranteed him to the track officials as an amateur. It could positively be stated, though, that he was not the Western crack whom Mrs. Dauvray had given out would ride for her, and whose telegram had first kindled his Lordship's misgivings.

The explanation generally accepted, said the *Circle*, was that the signature to the telegram had been a mere precau-

tionary ruse, and that its real sender was the mysterious "Mark Dorsett," a cowboy sweetheart from the widow's Texas ranch, whom she had not been willing to give up, even though she risked thereby her chance to become Lady Sackett.

As I finished the perusal of this seismic stir-up, I was more than ever overcome with shame at my fiasco. Why, Mrs. Dauvray's apartment directly adjoined my own more modest room, and when I had heard loud voices in there the evening before, it must have been the quarrel between herself and her fiancé.

I had been absorbed in my copy, though, and had impatiently striven to close my ears to the disturbing sounds. Why, oh, why could I not have shown ordinary feminine curiosity and have eavesdropped, if only for a minute? Then, this overwhelming defeat would not have been chalked up against me.

Yet it was no use to indulge in idle regrets or speculations as to what might have been at this late hour. The fat was in the fire, and I was ingloriously scooped. My aspirations toward journalism seemed to be nipped in the bud.

I knew about what to expect from my editor in New York, and I did not prove to be mistaken. Neither did I have to wait long for it. A buttoned page was even then making his way toward me with his monotonously droned, "Miss Chase—Miss Chase."

I signaled him to me, and took the yellow envelope which lay upon his salver; but I would not read it there under the gaze of all those watching eyes. I was afraid I might break down and give way altogether, if it should turn out to be the worst.

So, crushing it in my hand, I hurried from the veranda and sought the seclusion of my own chamber before I dared to take a peep at its contents.

Well, it was not a dismissal, but it was the next thing to it. In two or three curt sentences, I was given to understand that I had just about committed the unpardonable sin, but that there was one opportunity for me to retrieve myself. If I could obtain an exclusive interview with Mrs. Dauvray, giving her side of the

story, I might still be forgiven; but, failing in that, the only further copy wanted from me by the *Saffron* would be my resignation.

I actually had to laugh at the unconscious humor of the mandate. Here was a woman who had declined to justify herself or render any explanation to her betrothed, yet I, a green reporter of three days' standing, was expected to gain an immediate admission into her confidence—nay, was commanded either to do so, or lose my position.

It was like telling a man that, unless he were able to lift the Flatiron Building by his own unaided efforts, he would be hanged.

As I saw the situation, it was folly for me even to attempt such an impossibility, and I therefore drew a telegraph blank toward me, and hastily scribbling my resignation, rang for a bell-boy.

By some mistake at the desk, however, a maid was sent to my room instead of the boy—upon such trifles hang our destinies—and as I saw her standing there in her cap and apron, a sudden idea flashed upon my brain.

"Have you made up Mrs. Dauvray's apartment yet this morning?" I questioned excitedly, dragging her inside the door, and pressing a generous tip in her hand to insure an answer.

"Oh, no, ma'am," she told me. "Mrs. Dauvray had her breakfast in bed this morning, and did not get up until just a few moments ago. I didn't want to disturb her, so I've let her rooms go for the present."

"How much will you take to let me have your dress and cap, and do the work in there for you to-day?" I demanded. "I'm a newspaper woman, as you know, and I've simply got to have a peep inside those rooms."

"Oh, no, ma'am, I couldn't do that," she protested. "I'd lose my place, if I was caught at such tricks."

But I was determined. It cost me a half hour's steady argument, I'll admit, and every cent I had in my purse; still, in the end I won, and whisking out of my dress into hers, lost no time in repairing, broom and dust-cloth in hand, to my neighbor's door.



She was bending over some articles on the bed as I entered

I wanted to catch the widow unaware, if possible, so I bolted into the room after only the merest apology at a knock, and I must say that my little stratagem succeeded beyond my fondest hopes.

She was bending over some articles upon the bed as I entered, and although she started up with an exclamation of alarm, and hurriedly thrust the things out of sight in her trunk, she did not do so quickly enough for me to miss seeing what they were.

In an instant, the whole affair was clear to me; and although I tried to appear properly abashed over the scolding she gave me, it was really all I could do to keep from kicking up my heels and shouting aloud in my exultation.

Neither can I take much credit to myself for the manner in which her rooms were cleaned. In fact, my brain was in such a ferment over the discovery I had made, and I was so anxious to drop the chambermaid and get back to my rôle of Society correspondent for the *Saffron*, that I actually came within an ace of running the carpet-sweeper over the mattress, and decorating the chandelier with the towels.

At last, however, the work was finished after a fashion; and once back in my own room, I scarcely waited to exchange again with the maid, before I penned and sent off two rapid-fire messages.

One was a telegram to the editor of the *Saffron*, notifying him that within an hour I would have a signed statement from Lord Sackett denying all the allegations made concerning Mrs. Dauvray, and reaffirming his engagement to her.

The other was a note to Lord Sackett himself, and in it I asked him to come to me at once, and receive proof that his suspicions had been unfounded.

I knew I was taking a good deal upon my shoulders, but I believed from what I had heard and seen of the pair that the man was honestly in love, and would be only too willing to make up, if given half an opportunity.

Nor did I err in my calculations. Hardly had I reached the little reception-room where I had asked him to meet me, than the tall young English-

man appeared, his fair hair ruffled over his brow, his eyes heavy from an evidently sleepless night, his expression a cross between skepticism and an eager hope.

"Miss Chase?" he questioned, as he came toward me. Then, eyeing me suspiciously: "You sure, this is not some newspaper trick you are trying to play on me to get me to talk?"

"I think I can satisfy you on that point in just about one minute's time," I reassured him. "I failed to get the original story, you see, and now the only way to square myself is to make it appear a fake by effecting your reconciliation."

"You come from Mar—from Mrs. Dauvray?" he asked, sharply.

"No; she has not the slightest inkling of my purpose. Good luck put in my hands the means of clearing up your mistake which she scorned to use for herself, and I have hastened to report my discovery to you, in the belief that you are man enough to make amends and sue for pardon."

He flashed me an indescribable look from his blue eyes.

"Make amends!" he cried impulsively. "Sue for pardon! My word, if what you claim is true—! But, there," his brow clouding over again, "it can't be true, don't you know. I tell you, I saw the beggar go into her rooms myself."

"The same man who rode for her in the race?"

"Of course," impatiently. "Little, insignificant chap with a most extraordinary mustache, and—"

"Exactly," I broke in, unable longer to defer my triumph. "And if you want another look at that 'extraordinary mustache,' you will find it at this moment in Mrs. Dauvray's bureau drawer. The other articles which made up his attire, even including a pair of top-boots, are, if I mistake not, reposing in her trunk."

"What do you mean?" he frowned in puzzled bewilderment.

"Why, don't you see?" I cried. "The rider she expected having failed to appear, Mrs. Dauvray, true Texas girl that she is, rather than lose the race, rode 'Beauty Bright' herself. No wonder that

the mysterious jockey was not there when you stormed in at her door, and no wonder she declined to give an explanation, when she could see there was a horde of curious servants outside. In short, Lord Sackett, your supposed rival was nothing more than the madcap prank of a spirited woman."

"Well, by Jove!" was all he could stammer.

The point made plain, he evidently needed no further assurances in regard to the disguise.

"But, I say," his eyes narrowing once more, "that doesn't explain the wire she received. What right has my promised wife to be getting such a thing as this?"

As he spoke, he fished a crumpled telegram from his pocket, and spread it out before me.

It read:

MRS. MARIAN DAUVRAY,
SARATOGA,

Our understanding, of course, unchanged by what has happened. Let nothing cause you to doubt my absolute love and fidelity—

I followed the typewritten lines thus far, then suddenly reeled back with an incredulous gasp, for the name which was signed to the message was that of my own recreant knight, Arthur Gammon!

For a half-second, I believed I was going to faint; then my energetic nature asserted itself, and I started for the door.

Marian Dauvray might have declined to render any explanation of that telegram to her sweetheart, but she was not going to refuse me. An explanation of some kind was my due, and I intended to have it forthwith.

With her jealous suitor in my wake, therefore, I swept down the corridor, and this time, not even pretending an apology at a knock, hurled open her door.

"Aha!" I cried, as I perceived a man talking to her, and apparently making himself quite at home in her pretty little sitting-room; and, "Aha!" echoed Lord Sackett, who was peering over my shoulder.

The man was Arthur Gammon, and

the startled frown with which he had greeted my intrusion changed to an expression of beatific delight, when he recognized who it was.

"Marjorie!" he exclaimed, starting to his feet.

But I lifted a hand to hold him back.

"Wait," I said. "I think I should first like to understand just what all this means."

"And I, too," affirmed Sackett, advancing somewhat blusteringly into the room.

"And I will enlighten you both with pleasure," rejoined Arthur.

"Marian here has been explaining to me what has happened, and I think I am in a position to straighten out the entire tangle.

"When Mr. Walton came his cropper in the wheat-pit a couple of weeks ago, I realized that it was up to me to come to his assistance, and I therefore canceled all engagements, placed my entire resources at his disposal, and fought side by side with him until we turned his rout into a victory.

"Your father, Marjorie," turning to me, "has recouped all his losses, and has made in addition—just how much we hardly dare as yet to say.

"When I went to his aid, though, I sent a telegram to each of you girls, and in some way—whether through my own fault in the hurry of the moment, or whether through a blunder of the sending operator—the addresses became interchanged.

"Thus, you, Marjorie, received my message informing Marian that I could not keep my promise and ride 'Beauty Bright' for her in the steeplechase; while Marian got the one vowing fealty and devotion to you.

"That has been the root of the whole trouble, for I can assure Lord Sackett that he has no cause to be jealous of the jockey, 'Mark Dorsett,' who—"

"Oh, he knows all about that," I cut in impatiently. "Come along, Arthur," for I could tell from the way the other two were looking at each other, that our further presence was not desired. "You don't deserve it, but I'll forgive you, if you promise never to do anything of the sort again."

Well, there isn't much more to tell, for, of course, Lord Sackett and his widow made it up, and later in the day all four of us had the jolliest kind of a little dinner out at the Lake together.

"Why did you run away from New York, and leave no address behind you, though?" grumbled Arthur, when I had finished telling them of my newspaper experiences. "If it had not been for this scandal cropping out, and my feeling that I ought to come up here and stand by Marian, I might be hunting for you yet."

"Ah," I laughed, "I am not sorry that I did it, for it will furnish the greatest sort of a 'beat' for the *Saffron* to-morrow. "'Plunger' Walton's daughter and Her Searching Suitor!" How will that do for a catchy headline?"

"Do you really mean to write yourself up?" asked Marian Dauvray.

"Well, no," I decided on reflection. "I think on the whole, I shall leave that story to Amy Brooks. Looking after the 'Society End' is over for me; I," sliding my hand into Arthur's under the table, "have taken a different assignment."

Five Little Stories

BY CHARLES WESLEY SANDERS

IF I was a big man," Sammy McGuire reflected, "I'd go over there now and beat that pretty face of yours into a pulp. Then I'd choke you till you couldn't see."

But never, never would that sanguinary desire be gratified; and nobody was more bitterly and unhappily aware of the fact than Sammy. For the cashier, object of his enmity, stood six feet, his shoulders bulged, and his hands swung hammer-like at the end of long, strong arms. From Sammy's hatred one might have gathered that the cashier was of a villainous sort, but his face didn't bear that out. Though he sat twelve hours in his little cage on his stool, his smile never left him; and he supplemented this, whenever he had a chance, with a ready, cheerful word. Hence he was an asset to Sammy, owner of the restaurant. Sammy had to confess this, as he had disgustedly to confess that the cashier was a mighty good-looking man. He had the challenging blue eyes of a boy to whom bashfulness is unknown; he had the red cheeks of such a boy, and soft curly black hair. No wonder then that Sammy McGuire, standing with his hand on one of the middle tables, felt the fires of jealousy searing his staked soul.

How shall one describe Lucy? One

might paint her as one saw her one's self, as the cashier saw her, as the girl with the red hair saw her, or as Sammy himself saw her. But the cashier would paint too palely, the girl too redly, and Sammy too—what color does Love use?

In fact, Sammy was to be forgiven for falling in love with Lucy. She was a little girl—a little, slim, alert, shy girl, who flushed whenever a customer was familiar, and who dropped her eyes before knowing looks. Her hair was black and her eyes were blue, too; but they had not the hard blue of the cashier's; they were like the sky in June somewhat. And for the rest she had an honest Irish face. Also, when one of the customers had been too persistent, she would steal into the kitchen and hide her burning face for a moment on the shoulder of the fat cook.

This timidity was accentuated in Sammy's presence, he soon saw. She would, once in a while, stop and exchange a word with the cashier, but she was visibly frightened when Sammy approached her. (Of course Sammy didn't know it, but the cashier patronized her and treated her like a little girl. That was why she was not afraid of him. She had turned once unexpectedly to face Sammy, and she had had a glimpse of something hot and disturbing in his eyes.)

Sammy, as he viewed her agitated re-

treat on that occasion, thought she despised him because he was so commonplace in looks and in manners. He was freckled and sandy-haired and just five feet. Which must suffice for him, lest Romance languish and die.

And yet, in casting up his account to see what he had to offer a girl to make up for his commonness, he found a goodly number of items. He was an honest man; he didn't owe anybody a cent; he had a paying business which he had started with his savings as a waiter, and which he had made grow to what it was; and he had money in the bank. These meant comfort for his wife. Then he had a gentle heart and no inclination even to unwise indulgences. His wife could lay a bet on his being home every night in the week and twice on Sunday.

But still he had no way with women. Always they had either ignored him or made fun of him. He had had to discharge waitresses, because he had caught them smiling insolently at him.

The evening wore on and his gloom increased. Outside there was a patter of rain. The windows became obscured with mist. Customers shook water from their umbrellas and coats when they came in. There were little pools of water on the floor under the tables. Presently two or three newspaper men, out to lunch between editions, came in, and Sammy knew it was close to midnight. He put on his hat and coat and went down to the corner which the street cars passed. Lucy, her work finished at midnight, smiled at the cashier and went out into the rain. Sammy saw her approach the corner, but her umbrella, held close over her head, shut out her view. A little wind had risen, and she had to fight the umbrella to keep it from turning inside out. The wind caught her dress and wrapped her slim shape with it. Sammy loved her so much that even this plight filled him with apprehension. He ran to meet her and seized the handle of her umbrella.

"Let me have it," he said. "I'll take you home."

She stopped and stared at him. Fear was in her pretty raised face and in her widened eyes. She had read in newspapers how lightly employers sometimes

regard their young girl employees. She snapped the umbrella shut and turned and fled.

Sammy went home as a drunken man goes. In his room he put his hands on the top of the dresser and stared at his pale face. The thought of the girl's flight sickened him.

"My God," he whispered, "I can't be that bad, can I?"

Tossing all night, he dwelt upon this, and next morning he rose, sick and nauseated for the first time in his life. He refused the eggs and toast which his fat German boarding-mistress sought to thrust upon him. He left the house without his usual cheery "good-by," and he did not look at anybody in the restaurant, not even at Lucy. For her part, when she was idle she kept close to the cashier's desk; and she seemed to enjoy his talk, for she laughed, or, at least, smiled continually. Sammy stood it sullenly all day, but as night dropped he knew he must escape. He slipped into his coat, jammed his hat upon his sandy hair, and went out into the Autumn darkness. He walked a block and then stopped. He wanted to be away from the girl and yet he wanted to be with her.

By now the fire in the tenement across the street had got a fairly good start, but it was some minutes before Sammy saw the red glare in the rooms. When he did so, he forgot Lucy and his troubles. He dashed back to the restaurant. The girl met him at the door. He told her to telephone for the fire apparatus, and then he sped to the tenement again. The occupants were pouring into the street from three exits, carrying some of their belongings as they fled. Sammy stood and watched, alert and eager to help if any chance came. Presently a man staggered from one of the doors. He gripped a clay pipe between his yellow teeth. He was drunk.

"I guesh ev'body's out 'cept Mrs. Maloney," he informed Sammy. "Shesh up third floor. Shick. Got kid."

Sammy turned a quick, startled ear down the street. There was no sound yet of galloping horses and rattling engines and trucks.

"Where's her room?" he demanded.

The drunken man indicated a front room on the third floor. Sammy slipped through the gathering crowd and dashed up the stairs. He came to a haze of smoke on the first floor, to a pall of it on the second, and to flames on the third. Above him, as he sped toward the woman's room, he could hear the crackle and roar of the fire. The knob of the door was hot in his hand as he turned it. There was a lamp on a chair at the woman's bedside, and in the pale light of this he could see her frightened, staring eyes, set in a chalk-like face. An infant of a few months slept in her arms.

"Can ye get us out?" the woman asked huskily.

"Sure," Sammy said. "You heavy?"

"I'm nothin' but skin an' bones," she said. "I been sick a long time. Mebbe you better take baby first."

"I'll take you both," he answered. "Pick up the kid and then I'll pick you up."

He marveled at the little weight they were when he gathered them into his arms. The woman was like a child.

"Cover up your face," he told her, "and cover up the kid. Maybe we'll have to run through a little fire."

He supported his burden with his knee when he put out a hand to turn the knob. The flames, eagerly hungry, were there to meet him; and they sprang at him and almost reached him as he slammed the door. He could feel the room growing hot and close. He knew the fire would eat through the thin walls within a few minutes.

"Is there a fire-escape?" he asked the woman.

"Yes," she said, "it's just outside the window." She took courage and gasped, "Never mind me, sir. Get the baby out. You can't handle us both."

"We'll see," he said.

He put his burden back upon the bed and ran for the window. The ledge was broad, he thanked God, and there was a landing place on the fire-escape. He ran back to the bed. In another moment he was closing the window behind him. Below, someone in the increased crowd caught sight of them, and cries of warn-

ing and encouragement rose. The fire apparatus had just arrived. He could see men running to those at work on the hose, probably to tell them of the people on the escape.

A fierce desire to do this thing alone then swept over him. He took the woman and the babe in his arms, and clinging with one hand to the ladder of the escape started to descend. It was a perilous position and he felt himself begin to tremble. At the fourth rung, he had to pause and clutch it with both hands to keep from falling.

"Drop me down and save the baby," the woman moaned; and involuntarily she tried to cover her eyes.

A shout rose from directly below him. He looked down. And then he caught sight of the face he loathed. The cashier was coming up the escape.

"Go back," Sammy screamed. "I don't want you."

But the cashier only came steadily, swiftly up. He made as much speed as if he were ascending a staircase.

"Hand 'em over to me," he said with authority when he had reached Sammy.

"I will not," Sammy cried. "I'll take 'em down myself. Go back, I tell you."

"You'll have enough trouble to get down yourself. The fire escape is getting hot. We aint got all day."

He cheerfully pried Sammy's hold from the woman and the child, and they slipped down to him. He shifted them to the hollow of his great left arm, and clutching the fire-escape with his right hand started to descend. Tears of bitterness came to Sammy's eyes. He had faced this task at first on an impulse to save; but he had been in a flashing instant that he might perform an act worthy of a big man.

He clung to the fire-escape, dully watching his rival descend. Neighbors rushed forward and took the woman and the child from the cashier's arms. Some of them seemed to be babbling thanks or praise. But he only turned his broad back to them and raised his face to Sammy. Though he could not catch his words, Sammy understood his gestures to mean that he should come down. As Sammy stood up, the room beyond the window

through which he had come was suddenly illuminated. Then the searching, leaping flames sprang through the burned door. Sammy's heart went suddenly cold. He forgot his hate and his desire. He knew that he was face to face with death. And, notwithstanding the hopelessness of his love-affair, he did not want to die. He started down the fire-escape. The iron had grown so hot by now that he could scarcely touch it. As he slowly descended he could hear the crowd calling to him to hurry. As he reached the second story, he glanced down.

The cashier, ascending, was just below him.

"Go on back," Sammy screamed again. "I can take care of myself."

The cashier merely grinned and stopped, waiting. As Sammy reached the second floor window, the glass suddenly cracked and splintered, and flame and smoke poured out. Sammy could feel his clothing leap ablaze and the flesh about his chest grow hot. He gasped, inhaling fire and smoke. He felt as if his throat and lungs had been burned out. His hands weakened on the iron bar. Blackness shrouded him. Just before he slipped and started to fall, the cashier put his arm about him. The cashier's face was in the flame that had caught Sammy on the chest.

The crying of women, the excited exclamations of men, and the orders of policemen were the next things Sammy knew. He was lying on the ground with his head in a woman's lap. Beside him lay the cashier, being similarly ministered to. Some one had put a handkerchief over the cashier's face. Then came the far clang of an ambulance's bell, and quickly another. Sammy looked up at the woman.

"Lucy," he said, "don't let them take me to a hospital. Make them take me home. The old Dutch woman will take care of me better than they can at a hospital."

He saw that her eyes were bright as she nodded.

"Is he hurt?" Sammy asked, feebly, jerking his head toward the cashier.

Two tears rolled down the girl's cheeks.

"I guess he's hurt pretty bad," she said.

Sammy closed his eyes. Well, a man could suffer a lot if she were going to cry for him.

He lay very still while they prepared to put him into the ambulance. He heard Lucy insist that he be taken home and heard the ambulance attendant at length yield.

As the ambulance started, he had a feeling of desolation. He had tried to do what was brave and good and had merely got hurt and had caused the cashier to get hurt. Lucy would love the cashier more than ever now, because he had shown that he would risk his life for a rival. With sickened heart he remembered her tears. His own eyes became hot and he tried to turn on his side, sighing deeply. The air, drawn into his scorched throat and lungs, sent a shock of pain through him. Then he became aware that his chest was throbbing and burning. Perhaps he was badly hurt.

He opened his eyes presently. Had he slept? He could hear the swift trot of the ambulance horse and the steady whirl of the wheels. There was light now from the street lamps they passed, but a moment before he had been in darkness. Had he fainted? Was he—was he dying? He tried to rise and the blackness came again. He was unconscious till they lifted him from the ambulance and carried him up the steps.

"He should 'a' gone to a hospital," he heard an attendant say, as he was taken to his own room. "He's badly hurt."

He lay in a stupor while the German boarding-mistress helped the doctor to undress him. Then he felt soothing oil on his chest and cotton and bandages that shut out the air. They put something to his nostrils and told him to breathe deeply. That eased the pain in his throat and lungs, too; but now a feeling that he thought "funny" was coming over him. He had a sense of bigness and once something cracked in his head and flame shot before his eyes. He opened his eyes quickly at that, afraid to keep them closed. The doctor was viewing him intently, finger-tips on his wrist. Lucy stood at the foot of the bed.

"Did you come here?" he asked.

He saw her lips move. Then delirium came. The cracking sounds in his head and the lights before his eyes rocked him like a convulsion. He thought he was conscious for a long time, but he merely fell back on the bed and raved.

As his brain slowly cleared, he kept his eyes closed and listened. Something, he knew, had happened and he wanted to be sure what it was before he looked about him. He might have died, and this might be his tomb. He might be terribly maimed. Perhaps he had killed some one—the cashier? At that thought his eyes flew wide. Lucy sat beside him. She smiled and put her hand on his forehead. He closed his eyes. Yes, he remembered about the fire.

"How long is it now?" he asked, opening his eyes and looking at the girl.

"Four weeks," she said.

"Have I been out of my head all the time?"

"Yes, except when you slept."

"Am I hurt bad?"

"You were, but you're all right now. Everything is healing up. The doctor said this morning that as soon as the delirium stopped you would get well. He said you must have had something on your mind before you got hurt."

"What are you doing here?"

"Why, I've been nursing you. Mrs. Wetzell and I took turns. One of us was here all the time. The doctor said at the beginning that it all depended upon the nursing—He's nice. He said the nursing saved your life."

Sammy pondered for a while, adjusting himself to this.

"Everybody was nice," the girl went on. "Mrs. Wetzell certainly thinks a lot of you. I guess she would have stayed with you day and night if I hadn't been here."

She glanced at the dresser upon which there was a green bowl with a bunch of red carnations in it.

"That red-headed girl that worked in the restaurant for a while brought you those flowers. She cried when she saw you. Well, I used to feel sorry for her. She seemed to be sad all the time, and once I caught her crying. But I don't

know, I thought I smelled something to drink on her when she was here. She said she quit the restaurant the day after you were hurt. She said she knew I was here, I don't know how."

Sammy let all this go. It was unimportant. Something else lay closer to his heart.

"How did you happen to stay with me?" he asked. "Wasn't the cashier pretty badly hurt?"

The girl's lips trembled.

"Yes, he was hurt terrible," she said.

"I feel so sorry for him—I guess I feel sorrier than he does."

"Why didn't you take care of him then?" Sammy demanded, and his only excuse for the brutality of his question was the sudden flash of jealousy that shook him.

"Oh, I couldn't leave you," the girl said simply. "I couldn't have left you if I'd wanted to."

"I thought you cared a lot for him."

The girl's lips parted and her eyes widened.

"Me care? Why, he had a girl all the time he was working in the restaurant. He was saving his money to go into business for himself. 'I've got to have the coin for that gal,' he told me one day. 'And I'm going to get it.' Why, I saw them at the show once when some of us girls went. He took her downstairs, too. My, but she was pretty. She was a blonde and she was tall. She 'most came up to his shoulder. And she had on a fur coat, and she had diamonds in her ears—anyway, they sparkled. He saw us and smiled and took off his hat. You ought to see the way she looked at us. You'd thought we was the scum of the earth."

"She's been looking after him, then, has she?" Sammy asked, and his heart was suddenly light.

"Looking after him?" the girl repeated with some spirit. "No, I should say she hasn't been looking after him. I went to see him one day. And, oh, I felt so sorry. You know how he is, always laughing. You'd think he was never serious. We talked for a little while, and he just laughed the whole time. And he had his face all bandaged up, too. It seems that fire hit him right in the face when

he was going for you. 'Kid,' he said, 'I've lost my girl. What do you know about that?' I thought he was only fooling. He just said that the same as he said everything. But he said it was true, and then I knew he didn't feel so jolly as he let on. He brought out a note from under his pillow. It was from her. She said she had changed her mind, and she was going to Chicago. She hoped he'd get well all right and that that scar wouldn't be too bad."

"That scar?" Sammy repeated.

"Yes," Lucy said, and the tears coursed unnoticed down her cheeks. "The fire coming out of that window burned his face so bad he'll be scarred for life, the doctors say. When she came to see him, he told her about it and she wrote that note the next day. Oh, I think she was a nasty, mean woman, and him a man like that! And all he said when I read the

note was, 'Well, that's pretty tough, aint it, kid?'"

She covered her eyes with her handkerchief and sobbed.

Sammy raised a hand weakly till he touched one of hers.

"Don't," he implored, "you make me feel bad."

She suffered him to draw her down to him, and because he was so helpless she put her arms about him and kissed him when he asked her to.

The German boarding-mistress, sharer of the vigils that had saved him, came to the door of the bedroom unheard. She stared a moment, and then she turned away, her gingham apron to her eyes.

"*Ach Gott,*" she murmured, "*das ist was ich gedacht habe.*"

Ah, but she was very fat and very plain and quite five years older than Sammy.

Mrs. Howland's Injunction

BY MORTIMER CARLETON

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM HARNDON FOSTER

WITH a quick yet comprehensive glance at the colossal pulp mill to which Pollartsville owed its existence, Malcolm Seabright stepped from the railroad station platform into the dusty street, and made directly for the low frame structure where Edward Fletcher, Superintendent of the Pelican Pulp Company, had his office.

"Hanged if it isn't you!" Fletcher greeted him, pumping his hand with Herculean vigor. "Why didn't you let me know you were coming?"

"Don't proclaim it to all creation, Ed," Seabright cautioned, with a glance at Fletcher's staring clerks. "Isn't there a place where we can talk quietly?"

Superintendent Fletcher led the way to his private office.

"Now then," said Seabright, "who is Mrs. Laura Howland, and how in the name of all that's good has she managed

to hold us up? Your letters haven't made it at all clear."

"She's the most perverse, determined, and distracting young widow I've ever met," Fletcher declared, his expression a comical conflict of annoyance and admiration. "There are two million feet of spruce at the Upper Camp ready to haul in, and not a foot can I budge it till she gives us right-of-way through her property."

"But we can't stop for a woman!" exclaimed Seabright. "Man alive, don't you see that? We've got to fill the Associated Printers' contract. If we don't, old Raden and his Consolidated Mills will shut us out for good and all." At the thought he swallowed hard. "You ought to hear 'em clamoring for that paper down in New York. And here we are with the mill running at half its capacity because a woman wont let us lay

a few feet of track across her land. It's downright absurd, Ed! Let her name her own price. Buy her whole confounded estate—or build around her. Anything to get that wood!"

"She wont sell for a million dollars a foot," replied Fletcher. "As for building around her, we can't do it. Up there the valley narrows to a gorge, and on both sides of the river there is nothing but sheer rock. Mrs. Howland owns a quarter-mile strip right across the valley. East of her strip the stumpage belongs to the Consolidated Mills. The only way we can get through is on the west side, high up, along the edge of Elbow Bluff, and it's right there that she's blocking us. Billy Dalton made the cut through the bluff before she realized what was coming. But before he could lay the track, she got an injunction."

"Hang the injunction!" Seabright expostulated. "Once we get the tracks down and the wood moving, Norton is lawyer enough to fix that. Has Dalton tried rushing his men into the cut at night and surprising her?"

Fletcher's round face wrinkled with a reminiscent smile.

"Dalton himself with seventy-five dagos tried it last week," he said. "They had laid six or seven rails when Mrs. Howland appeared at the head of fifteen deputy-sheriffs armed with guns. Dalton's Italians are running yet. And now she has hired a hundred men from the Consolidated's camp. The Consolidated people are only too glad to let her have them."

"We must get her away," Seabright decided. "Who is she? Where does she come from? Why is she so dead set against us?"

"Who is she?" said Fletcher, with a grin. "She's a widow—a fetching widow. Wait till you've looked into her blue eyes, and felt her smile, old Go-Ahead! She hails from New York, I believe. Her husband was an artist. He built up here to commune with Nature and paint the forest primeval. And here he sleeps, far from the haunts of man, the wilderness his monument. While she, the fair Laura—" Fletcher clasped his

great hands in exaggerated ecstasy, and heaved a prodigious sigh. "While she," he went on, "stands watch and ward against our desecrating ax!"

"I'll go up to the cut and look things over," Seabright declared.

"And get thrown into the river," chuckled Fletcher. "When Mrs. Laura Howland hears that the President of the Pelican Pulp Company has struck town, she'll—"

"She must not hear," interrupted Seabright. "You and Dalton are the only men here who know who I am. Give out that I'm a government inspector. And now take me to supper. I'm starving."

The two left the office and walked up the street to the Pelican House. After supper, Seabright wrote a long letter to Norton, the Pelican Company's New York attorney.

"I've asked Norton to find out who Mrs. Laura Howland is, and to use his wits to get her back to town—summon her to court or something like that," he explained to Fletcher. "I've also told him to book Jake Dubleem for an exhibition boxing-match at Pollartsville any night within the next two weeks, and to hire fifty men who can lay and spike rails in a hurry. He will send the men to Cantacue and I shall keep them in the woods beyond Elbow Bluff until I want them. Then—"

He drew a deep, eager breath, and his eyes sparkled at his vision of the ultimate triumph.

"Anything to beat old Curley Raden, Ed!" he concluded.

It was a characteristic speech. Malcolm Seabright had inherited the Seabright tenacity of purpose along with the Seabright fortune and the Seabright feud with Curley Raden and his Consolidated Mills Company. Failing to get control of the Pelican Pulp Company, Raden had sworn to annihilate it. Malcolm Seabright, Sr., had died defiant at his desk—of overwork, his physicians said. And Malcolm Seabright, Jr., fresh from college, had taken his father's place. In the first year of his struggle Curley Raden's money had lured away two of his right-hand men. Against the potency of gold Malcolm staked the fidelity of college



Mrs. Howland accompanied him to a cliff which afforded a view to the north

friends, and silent "Billy" Dalton and big "Cherub" Fletcher filled the vacancies. During the next five years, in spite of youthful blunders, Seabright had held his ground against the veteran Raden. At the end of the fifth year he suddenly took the offensive, and before Raden's Company awoke to his change of tactics, he had stolen their best customer, the Associated Printers.

It was one thing to get the Associated Printers' contract, but quite another to fill it. Malcolm doubled the capacity of his pulp mill at Pollartsville, and bought the stumpage throughout the upper reaches of the valley at whose foot the village was situated. His engineers, in charge of Dalton, extended his railroad north from Pollartsville and south from Cantacue. His woodmen swarmed into the valley like devastating insects, leaving it bare and brown behind them till they reached the strip which Mrs. Laura Howland owned. This strip they passed through, to continue their hewing, peel-

ing, and rolling in the valley beyond. But the engineers were halted.

Until the two halves of the railroad were joined, the logs in the upper valley were so much waste timber, the voracity of the big mill was unappeasable, and the Associated Printers' contract could not be filled.

"Anything to beat old Raden!" Seabright had said to Fletcher, and that thought was uppermost in his mind the following morning, as one of his engines bore him laboriously up the grade from the mill to the cut at Elbow Bluff. The road was far above the river, and beyond the clearings he could see a fair expanse of rolling green. But to its beauty his eye was blind; to him it meant so much "hard wood," so much spruce and hemlock—the sinews of the war he waged with Curley Raden.

When the engine reached Elbow Bluff, Seabright's first glance assured him that Dalton and his engineers had done the only possible thing. At his left frowned

the wooded, precipitous hill on the crest of which was Mrs. Howland's bungalow. To the right was a sheer drop of three hundred feet to the foaming river. Before him lay the cut, a narrow shelf carved out of the slope of the hill.

At the entrance to the cut were two small buildings—a tool shed and the division engineer's office. Seabright noted with approval that the latter contained a telephone. In the cut itself the dirt was trampled hard by the tread of men. Here and there lay a few cross-ties. Where the track ended, the rails were piled up, rusty and useless. Beyond the rails ten of Mrs. Howland's men stood guard.

Seabright advanced with the brisk, authoritative air which had won for him the soubriquet, "Old Go-Ahead."

"Which way to Mrs. Howland's?" he asked.

One of the men pointed to a path at the end of the cut. Seabright pushed on. As he climbed the path, he counted twenty more men guarding the northern approach, and he frowned. This Mrs. Howland evidently was not a woman of half-way measures.

From the edge of the cut he caught a glimpse of her house, and a ten minute walk brought him, rather short of breath, to the veranda.

Out of its cool shadow a woman came to meet him. She was young—about two years his junior, Seabright decided. And Fletcher's adjective did not do her justice. In fact, "fetching" was not the word at all. It suggested amplexness of form and a vigorous locomotion. And she was tall and supple, and she bore herself like a queen.

"Mrs. Howland?" he said. "My name is Malcolm. I'm inspecting the logging that the Pelican Company is doing."

"I'm glad you've come," she replied. "It's time the Government learned how they are ruining this beautiful country. Wont you sit down?"

She smiled, and Seabright understood why men were zealous in her behalf. He sat down.

"What I want to know is this, Mr. Malcolm," she went on, and Seabright understood why she had succeeded in

thwarting his engineers: "Has that Company a right to desecrate this valley? Look to the south."

Seabright looked, and saw his pulp mill pouring forth a dense, black cloud of smoke against the green of the far horizon and the blue of the June sky.

"When Mr. Howland first found this spot," she commented, "there was no mill, nor great, desolate clearings. The entire valley was clothed in green, and it was like a place enchanted. And now they're cutting to the north as well," she added.

Seabright felt uncomfortable.

"If you had bought and held the land—" he suggested.

"But we never dreamed they'd begin down there. The railroad terminated at Hill's Junction then, fifteen miles away. And to haul logs from the valley to the other railroad at Cantacue is impracticable, the grade is so heavy. We bought the strip running east across the valley because a paper company began work over the ridge. Mr. Howland was confident that we were well protected."

"Didn't Mr. Howland approve of—er—utilizing the forest?"

"Never!" declared Mrs. Howland, her blue eyes aglow. "He—we built here because it was so primeval, so unspoiled by man. He was so fond of it that—that he asked me to let him—rest here—always."

"Oh," said Seabright, with growing sympathy.

"And—and that horrid Pelican mill actually dug into our mountain and started to run its road within—within a stone's throw of his—his—"

"Then I don't blame you, Mrs. Howland, for trying to stop—"

Seabright paused in sudden amazement at what he was saying.

"Still," he resumed in a brisker tone, "if the Pelican Company has a clear title to the land, the law will not stop them. Of course," he added, "if you dispute that title, or if you think they are taking more stumpage than they have a right to, the matter will be looked into."

Mrs. Howland accompanied him across the clearing in front of the house and through the woods at the left to

a cliff which afforded a view to the north. Seabright studied the valley carefully, his eyes following the railroad from the cut, and counting and measuring the bare patches where his men had logged.

"They're cleaning up the valley pretty thoroughly," he said approvingly. "It will take several days to inspect the work."

He seemed in no hurry to begin his inspection, however. The day was warm, the mossy rock on which they stood was swept by a delicious wind, and he was loath to part with his guide.

They sat down, and presently Seabright became conscious of a strange distaste for commercial strife and sordid rivalry. Under the blue June sky—deep and serene as Mrs. Howland's eyes—such things seemed distant and unreal. Somewhere out of the stillness a hermit-thrush called, and the mellow notes were fraught with a thrilling sweetness, like an elfin summons to fairy realms. Seabright held his breath, and when the song ended, he could feel the hush of the forest, mysteriously palpable, wrapping him about. He looked up, and found his companion's eyes upon him. As their gaze met, he glimpsed the golden world which had inspired the thrush's melody.

It was a fool's world, Seabright told himself that night. But for the next three days he lived in it, and found it good. Together he and Mrs. Howland tramped the valley through. Never before had he known such a companion. She was untiring. Hills that taxed his strength and robbed him of speech, she took with ease, the deeper glow in her cheeks and her quickened breathing the only toll she paid. She seemed imbued with the freshness, the charm, the mystery of the forest. At times she was as joyous as the wild, free creatures that scurried across their path; and again, in the shadowy aisles of giant hemlocks, or beside the leaping river, she was lost in meditative silence. Every hour at her side was an hour of new delight.

On the fourth day, as Seabright was hurrying away to take the engine to Elbow Bluff, Fletcher handed him a cipher telegram from Norton. Seabright

glanced at it impatiently. Then, with a little start of surprise, he read it again, slowly and painfully.

"Curley Raden's daughter!" he exclaimed, looking long at Fletcher. "That explains why the Consolidated Mills were anxious to supply her with men, and why she stopped our road. And she made me believe that she loved the woods for their own sake—that she and her defunct husband bought across this valley to protect the scenery from Raden's Consolidated Mills!"

"She'll make you believe it again the next time you see her," chuckled Fletcher.

"She's the cleverest woman I've ever met," said Seabright, a prey to conflicting emotions.

He stared thoughtfully across the street at the waiting engine.

"Well," he voiced his thoughts, "I needn't feel any compunction in the matter—now."

"Compunction!" laughed Fletcher, giving his employer a sly dig in the ribs. "Is that your worst feeling?"

Seabright studied the telegram again.

"Norton has sent on fifty men to Cantacue," he said in his old, brisk way. "And Jake Dubleen will be here on the noon train. Spread the news. Challenge every man in the valley to come in and box with him at the Pollartsville theatre to-night. It's to be a grand holiday for all our men—and for Mrs. Howland's, too, if we work it right. Norton promises to get her away from here some time to-day. And now for the enemy's country. I must see Dalton at the Upper Camp, and get those fifty men over from Cantacue. Stay close to the 'phone, Ed. And remember—you're to keep all our regular men away from Elbow Bluff. But you're not responsible for me or the fifty."

Fletcher brought his great hand down on Seabright's shoulder with a resounding thump of approval. And he went chuckling back to his office, while Seabright hurried to his engine, intent on seeing Dalton without loss of time.

Unlike Fletcher, Dalton took life with an intense seriousness. Fletcher laughed men into good-nature and obedience.

Dalton incited them by his quiet, indomitable perseverance. When Seabright met him in his office at the Upper Camp and outlined his plan, Dalton's dark eyes gleamed.

"That's the way to beat Mrs. Howland—surprise her," he commented.

He summoned Pierson, his assistant.

"Tommy," he ordered, "have Blerdin blow the siren—fire-signal. As fast as the men come in, send 'em through the cut to Pollartsville. Jake Dubleen's struck town, and we're all going to take a day off—with pay. Caution the boys to mind their business in the cut, or Mrs. Howland's men wont let 'em through."

He looked at his watch.

"Is Number 10 in yet?"

"Twenty minutes ago," said Pierson.

"They're unloading now."

"Good! Tell Trent to keep steam up. I want him to take me to Cantacue. You're in charge here, Tommy, for the day."

Pierson went out. Five minutes later the siren whistle at the saw-mill echoed weirdly through the valley. From the mill, from the train-yard, from the stables, the blacksmith's shop, the camp mess, the sleeping quarters, men poured into the clearing in front of Dalton's office and formed into squads with the precision that comes from long and careful training. From up the valley two engines sounded shrill responses.

"That's fine management, Billy," said Seabright, watching from the window.

"The Consolidated people might accidentally have a fire along our border," Dalton explained. "I don't want them to beat us that way."

Pierson gave his instructions to the men. With a lusty cheer the squads merged into a confused, excited mass which soon melted away.

"They're like a pack of school-boys," laughed Seabright.

"I'd better be off," said Dalton. He took a step towards the door, then turned. "Suppose Mrs. Howland wont let her men off?" he questioned. "Shall I go ahead?"

"I'll see to that," Seabright assured

him. "As soon as she is out of the way, I'll 'phone Fletcher and he will make a truce with them."

After Dalton had gone, Seabright started on the five-mile tramp back to Elbow Bluff. Thus far his plans had been carried through with a celerity that promised success. And success, just now, he desired with all the fervor of his nature. In the front of his mind was the damning fact that Laura Howland was Curley Raden's daughter. Knowing this, he told himself that her guileless blue eyes hid deep thoughts; that her bright smile and soft voice were enlisted to deceive him; and that he himself was a man set apart from other men by his peculiar purpose, and therefore a man who must ride rough-shod over the emotions that other men were wont to cherish.

But when he reached Mrs. Howland's bungalow, his self-control was sorely taxed by the sight of blue eyes dimmed with tears, and deceitful lips that drooped pathetically.

"My dear Mrs. Howland!" he exclaimed, inwardly anathematizing Norton. Why couldn't Norton have got her away without reducing her to such a plight?

"My father," she said. "He's not expected to live."

Seabright stiffened.

"Where is he? When did you hear?"

"New York," she replied. "They sent a boy over from Cantacue with the telegram, and—and he lost the way. The last train from Cantacue to-day left an hour ago."

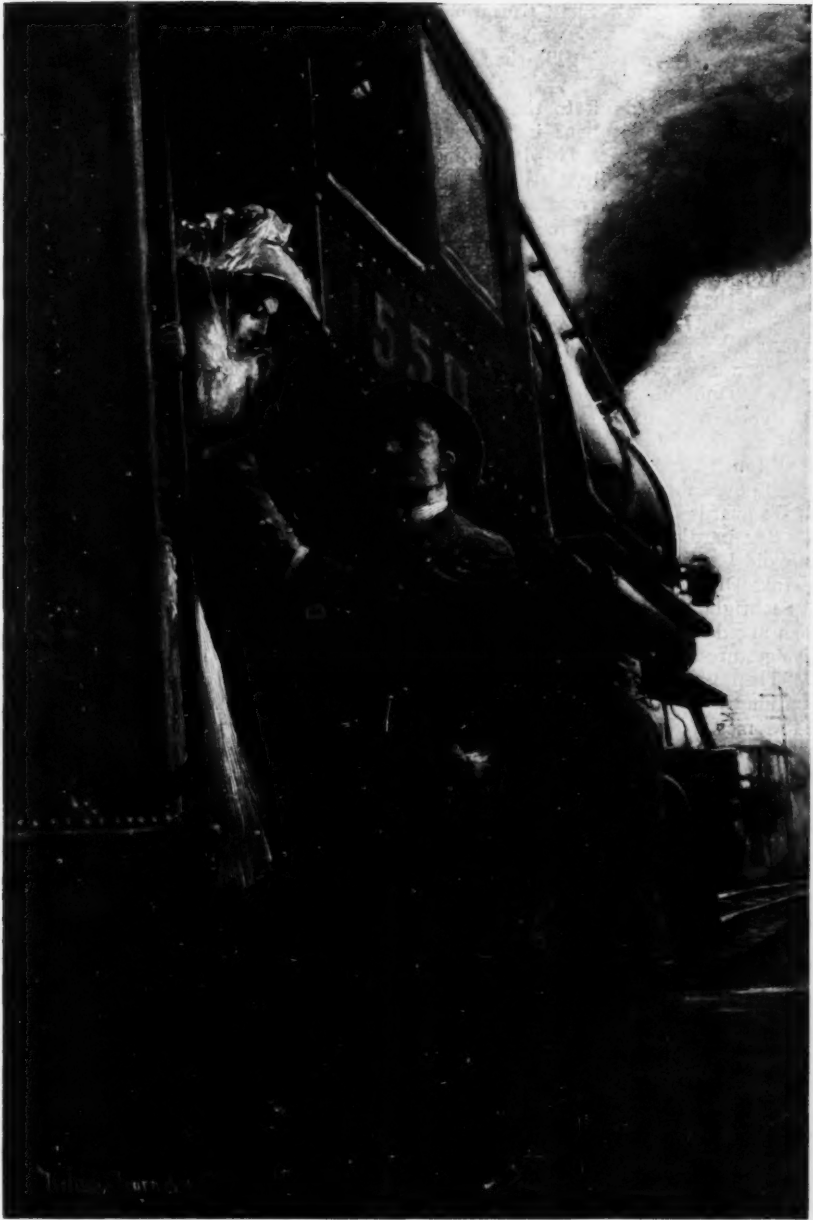
Seabright did some quick thinking.

"You must get a special at Pollartsville," he told her. "That will take you to Hill's Junction in time for the night express from Montreal, and you'll be in New York to-morrow morning. I'll arrange it for you."

"How good you are!"

"You will have to hurry," he added hastily. "I'll go on to the cut and telephone the Pelican Superintendent to send up an engine and order the special."

"But he will take advantage of my absence," she demurred, wrung by a new fear.



As he assisted her from the engine he dared not trust his tongue

"Ask him for a three days' truce. He seems a decent fellow. Shall I mention it to him?"

"Yes, yes — anything!" she cried. "Only hurry!"

Seabright dashed off to the cut. He was still at the telephone in the engineer's shack, when Mrs. Howland joined him. He rang off hastily.

"It's all arranged, Mrs. Howland," he said. "Fletcher will have the special waiting, and he has sent an engine for us. It ought to be here any moment now."

"But the truce," she said. "Does he agree to that?"

"As it happens, he's given all the Pelican men a day off. There's a pugilist named Dubleen at Pollartsville, and they've all come in to see him. Fletcher bids me tell you that none of his men shall touch a rail while you are away."

While Seabright spoke, Mrs. Howland's guards had edged nearer.

"Beg parding, sir," one of them put in, "did I understand you to say Dubleen — Jake Dubleen?"

Seabright nodded, and the group of men urged their spokesman on with furtive gestures.

"Then it aint no bluff, ma'am," he continued, looking at Mrs. Howland. "The men from the Pelican up-valley camp streaked through here two hours ago. They wont lay no tracks to-morrow nor the day after. They're sure out for a hot time, ma'am, and begging your parding, ma'am, we'd like to be in it."

"Very well, Lander," Mrs. Howland acquiesced. "Since Mr. Fletcher has given his word. But no brawling."

"Thank you, ma'am," said Lander, grinning with delight. "I'll see that the boys don't act too outrageous. We'll be on the job again to-morrow night, ma'am."

As the men trooped off, Mrs. Howland's eyes met Seabright's, and her drooping lips curved in an adorable little smile. It was as if in that glance, she had accorded him an intimate place in her life; and a sudden ecstasy swept his heart. But the next instant his elation vanished before an overwhelming sense of the deception he was practicing upon her, and he was put to the painful neces-

sity of reminding himself that she was the daughter of Curley Raden.

He was relieved when the engine which Fletcher had dispatched, reached the cut. Helping Mrs. Howland into the cab, he curtly ordered the engineer to hasten.

It was a wild ride. The engineer took chances that made Seabright catch his breath. Around curves they sped with the shriek of the wheel-flanges echoing among the hills; across wooden bridges that seemed too frail to endure the strain; and down sharp inclines with a plunge like that of a ship dropping into the trough of an enormous sea.

On the final downward rush into the flats of Pollartsville a lurch of the engine threw Mrs. Howland into Seabright's arms. In that brief, tense second while she clung to him for support, Seabright was a prey to something more than compunction. A desire, wild as their ride through the shadowy forest, surged over him, engulfing the iron will that had till now held heart and soul steadfast to its one great purpose. He drew her closer.

"Laura!" he whispered.

His voice was lost in the warning shriek of the engine, and Mrs. Howland relinquished her clasp on his arm. Seabright, peering forth, saw the station.

As he assisted her from the engine to the waiting special, he dared not trust his tongue.

"Thank you so much, Mr. Malcolm," she said, leaning down from the car platform. "You've done me a service that is hard to requite."

The alluring shyness in her eyes, the heightened color in her cheeks, made his heart leap madly. The train was fast gathering speed. He took a step or two, and tried to speak. But for the first time in his life his tongue faltered.

"I've done—if you only knew—"

For a long minute he stood staring after the receding train. Then, turning abruptly, he crossed the street and entered Fletcher's office.

An hour later, when the last of Mrs. Howland's men had come in, and Pollartsville was filled to overflowing with a jostling, shouting, good-natured throng intent on seeing the far-famed Dubleen



"We've won, old Go-Ahead!" said Dalton

practice the manly art of self-defense, Seabright was hurrying up the track to the cut at Elbow Bluff.

When he reached it, he found Dalton and the men from Cantacue hard at work. Great fires illumined the brown earth, red-shirted forms darted in and out of the shadows, and the night shook with a dull medley of sound. Already the ties were in place and across them ran a steadily lengthening irregular parallel of loose rails.

Seabright moved here and there, watching the progress of the work. And as he watched, he forgot the swiftly flying minutes, forgot the blue eyes and smiling lips that had so lately assailed his peace. A sense of his own power possessed him. This was his work, his generalship; and these his men, sweating that he might triumph. That line of rusty rails, slowly but surely taking shape, and creeping on and on, was the visible sign of the contest he was pledged to—a contest in which his blood gloried; a contest he, and he alone, would win.

The rosy dawn stole up the sky, putting to shame the dying fires and revealing grimy, toil-worn workers still bent in frenzied energy to their task. Three more rails—two on this side, one on that! Billy Dalton, pale, his dark eyes burning, urged the men on. Seabright breathed painfully.

Suddenly Dalton waved his handkerchief. From the upper end of the cut came the triumphant whistle of an engine, and the creak of laden cars. The men stepped back. Slowly, insolently, with clanging bell, the engine pulled the long train through.

In silence they waited till it had passed. Then Dalton stepped forward and wrung Seabright's hand. A long cheer went up from the men.

"We've won, old Go-Ahead!" said Dalton.

"Yes, we've won," Seabright responded. "We've beaten old Raden—beaten him at his own game."

But he spoke mechanically. In the hour of his triumph he remembered what,

in the heat of battle, he had forgotten. And the remembrance robbed his triumph of the sweetness which he had anticipated. After all, the victory was incomplete. It could not give to him what he had given to it.

From mere force of habit, however, he proceeded to make his victory secure. The fifty men were armed and kept in the cut. A long telegram was sent to Norton; it was Norton's business to soothe the ruffled dignity of the law and there was Mrs. Laura Howland; her righteous anger should descend upon the guilty—and none other.

Two days later she returned *via* Can-tacue, and Seabright went to her bungalow.

"It was a mistake—or a trick," she began, with eager indignation. "My father was never better in his life. If that man Fletcher has broken his promise—"

"He has kept it—and yet the rails are laid," Seabright interrupted.

He took her to the top of the cut, and she saw the armed guards patrolling the track.

"Whose men are these?" she demanded.

"Mine," he answered.

"Yours?"

Her blue eyes fixed him incredulously.

"Yes, mine," he asseverated, unabashed. "I brought them here. They acted under my orders. Fletcher had nothing to do with them."

"And the telegram?"

"I am responsible for that, too."

"But why?" she asked. "Why? I—I trusted you. I thought that you—"

She broke off, and the color mounted her cheeks.

"I deceived you from the first," he confessed in a curiously even tone. "You interfered with my plans. You stood in my way—you and your father." He paused. "If I had it to do over again," he went

on, "I would do it. Not for all the happiness there is in the world, would I let Curley Raden beat me."

"Who are you?" she asked.

"Malcom Seabright. I own the pulp-mill yonder," he answered simply, without pride.

"Oh," she said. "Still, that doesn't explain what you said about my father and—me."

Seabright studied her in surprise. Then comprehension of Curley Raden's method flashed upon him.

"Ah," he said, "you served him unwittingly. Had I known that from the first, I wouldn't have done—what I have done." His eyes searched the distant blue. "You didn't know," he resumed, "that in keeping my road from crossing your land, you would ruin your father's chief competitor?"

"No," she replied, "I didn't know. Since I've lived up here, I've lost track of things. But I see—now. I've been deceived by everybody."

The grief and bitterness in her voice went to Seabright's heart.

"But I thought all along that you knew," he pleaded. "And it meant so much to me!"

"So I perceive," she said coldly. "Now that you have got what you wanted, I hope that you are satisfied."

"I'm not!" he protested. "I thought I should be. But I'm not. It isn't ultimate—complete. It lacks—you!"

"Indeed!" she said with subtle irony.

"You — you," Seabright repeated, compelling her glance.

For an instant she endured his eyes. Then hers dropped. Seabright drew a step nearer, his hand extended.

"You—and your love—our love," he whispered.

She raised her eyes to his—a swift, shy glance. Seabright's hand found hers.

"Laura!" he murmured.

And then, with a little sigh, she made his triumph ultimate.



The Love That Never Died

BY EMERSON TAYLOR

Author of "The Home Port," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN NEWTON HOWITT

THROUGH the quiet of that long, cool hour following sunrise, when the perfume of the dewy June night was still more than a memory, a man and a girl, whose eyes were the color of the sea in summer, sat close together in an old garden. The hoop of gold which the girl wore on her slim finger was still undimmed. Overhead was a dance of apple blossoms; yonder, far out in the harbor which bounded the old garden on the lower side, lay a man-of-war, her anchor chain hove short. And watching the ship very silently, the two could almost hear the beating of their hearts.

A white gig left the cruiser's side. The lovers caught the flash of the wet oars, then the gay flutter of the flag at the stern. It turned, and headed straight toward the little wharf at the foot of the garden below them.

"They're coming," the man said very quietly.

The girl stood up.

"Sure you have everything you want?" she asked, after a tiny pause.

Half a dozen bits of baggage were heaped on the path beside them—a brown tin epaulet case, a black tin box for the cocked hat, two plain, heavily

banded, gray trunks, with the owner's name and rank in white letters on their tops.

"Oh, I can buy what I might want at Gibraltar," he assured her.

"Of course. But," and her hesitation was adorable, "I'd like to think I hadn't forgotten anything for you. Even though—"

"Dearest one!" He was very contrite.

"I'm so glad you have such a perfect day, Stephen," she made herself say. "How far do you suppose you'll have gone by to-night?"

Rapidly and at some length, glad perhaps of a refuge in technical talk, he explained how they would first stand out to sea to adjust compasses, then make the light ship off the Great South Shoal as a starting point.

"We'll be fairly on our way by morning," he concluded.

"To Gibraltar!"

"Well, that's the first stop."

The white boat was coming on fast now. The coxswain stood up to see his landing place more clearly. The lovers could hear the thudding of the oars in the row-locks.

"They'll be here in a minute, sweet-

heart." She raised her lovely young face to his, as he took her in his arms. "You won't be too lonely?"

"I will remember what has happened," she replied, and her slow, half-whispered speech had in it a thrill like the voice of a 'cello in the dusk.

He kissed, then released her, and for a moment they watched the oncoming boat silently, side by side.

"Just think!" His tone was made to show some whimsical mirth—or what passed for it. "Married a week ago last Wednesday, and then, just as we began to settle down a *little*—"

"Have you got it safe?" the girl interrupted.

"Well, I guess!" He drew two official-looking papers from an inner pocket. "My commission!" And he held up one of the documents very proudly. "Ah, sweetheart, that is pretty good! If I do say it!"

"Captain at thirty-six! I know what that means, man of mine."

"But—sailing orders!" And he thrust the other envelope back into his pocket with a kind of groan. "Oh, well—!"

"The orders were sure to come sooner or later," she urged. "And think—it's the *Rappahannock*!"

"The *Rappahannock*!" He looked off to where lay the trim frigate, a thin stream of smoke rising from her stumpy funnel. "That's all very well for *me*, my darling, but—what will you be doing all the time I'm gone?"

"I shall be dreaming," she answered, "of the day my sailor man comes back to me."

"But—three years?"

"We'll pretend we have been asleep," she said quickly. "But in the morning—it will be on a day like this one, I think." And she smiled up at him beautifully and bravely. "I will be waiting for you here, in the garden."

The boat ran alongside the little wharf smartly, the bow man holding fast with his boat-hook. The coxswain rolled up the garden path.

"Honor t' report the boat's ready, sir."

"Very well, McCarthy. Get that dunnage aboard."

"Yes, sir."

"Good-by," whispered the youngest captain.

But his bride, smiling at him still, laid light fingers across his lips.

"Good-night!" she answered. "Pleasant dreams!"

"Until the morning," said the youngest captain, catching some of her strength. Then they turned from one another, and within an hour the *Rappahannock* was headed for the open sea.

That was ever so many years ago.

"And if I couldn't?" exclaimed Admiral Trevor.

He looked past his pretty daughter, who had come to spend the day on what she felt was both an errand of mercy and a matter of duty, to where, above the mantelpiece in his shabby old living room, in a frame of oak carved like a cable, hung an enlarged photograph of one of our jaunty, old time frigates, as she lay in the smiling sunshine off Villefranche. Above the photograph hung slantingly the service sword he had worn as a midshipman under Farragut, and later, as the youngest captain in the service.

"I can't!" declared the Admiral. "In fact, Theodora darling, I won't!"

Mrs. Suydam laughed briefly and breezily. She was that splendid sort of young woman who is always planning conscientiously for what ought to be other people's happiness, and she had her dear father's interests very deep at heart.

"No?" she said. "Then I promise to sit right here till I've talked down every one of your objections. What I've been saying is nothing, most incorrigible of parents."

"But you see, my dear," said the Admiral gently, not so much as if making an objection to his daughter's plans as suggesting a new point of view, "I—I'm rather used to this old house by the harborside—and to the place in general."

"Of course," she conceded. "You've lived here ever so long."

"I'm very fond of it," he added, looking out at the garden, with its apple tree and the bright water beyond with the ships at rest there.

"That I can understand," allowed Theodora. "The associations—"

"Something of the sort. Yes."

"But, father dear, the house is fearfully damp, and you know you haven't been well. We worry about you fearfully, Billy and I do. And you owe your family something, I think."

And with that for a start, she opened on him with her big guns, smothering, quite in accord with the right theory of artillery practice, any return fire her blessed but impossible parent might have attempted. She chose her own range; she had had much practice at similar targets; she knew exactly all her adversary's vulnerable surfaces. Oh, capital at battle practice, that same young and charming woman! Ten minutes of steady firing, and she sent aloft that peremptory signal every service knows. Togo flew it for the Russians at Tsushima.

"And so, father dearest, the long and short of it is, you have simply *got* to come and stay with us in town."

After all, she had her mother's eyes. The old fighter fired a gun to leeward.

"I surrender," he murmured, with a little wave of his hand.

"With all the honors of war!" cried Theodora gayly.

"I avoid needless sacrifice of life," the Admiral replied, one of his rare smiles lighting his face beautifully. "What chance has the *Rappahannock* against the *Dreadnought* anyway?"

"You're always talking ship!" laughed his daughter.

"Always," he agreed quickly. "Always!"

She leaned down from the steps of the parlor-car, just as the express was about to start next morning.

"I almost forgot," said Theodora. "Bring down the old silver—mother's things—when you come, dad, will you?"

"Her—wedding-present, you mean?"

"It's so quaint," said Theodora, as the train bore her out of hearing. "Good-by."

"McCarthy," said the Admiral to him, whom the changing years had changed from able seaman and later Jimmy Legs to his old officer's servant and tyrant, "I'm ordered to shore duty—to appear

before the retiring board, my man."

"You won't like it, sorr."

"It's orders," said the Admiral briefly.

"Ye'll be applyin' for duty on the active list again within six months," declared the ex-master-at-arms resolutely. "Beggin' your pardon, sorr."

"Ah!" replied his chief. "By the way, anything to report from the bridge this morning?" (There was an upper balcony at the rear of the old house from which one could sweep the sea to the eastward with one's glasses.)

Unconsciously McCarthy brought his heels together. His middle fingers were laid straight down the seams of his trousers.

"The *Connecticut*, *Cleveland* and *Scorpion* went out about seven, sorr, steerin' south-easterly."

"Going to Gardiner's Bay probably."

"Naval milishy aboard, sorr." How indicate the scorn in the veteran's tone? "They do be goin' for target practice."

"Ah! Then this afternoon we'll hear the guns, if the wind holds." He was listening for the roar of them already, you would swear. "That's all, McCarthy."

"'Tis the man he was he is now," said McCarthy later in the day, discussing the Admiral's departure. "Always thinkin' of the sea. 'Tis there and then he lives, not here at all, thirty years ago and three thousand miles off. There or in the garden yonder." (An old chatterer, McCarthy, who bored his fellows in that mysterious world of servants with age-old tales!) "And 'twas the fine young wife he had, too. I seen her once—the day he come aboard the *Rappahannock*."

"Died, didn't she?"

"Sure she did."

And once more the story was unfolded by him who, as orderly, had been present when a certain cable message came from home to the youngest captain in the service. The *Rappahannock* was at Rio then. Oh, a very old story! Of the same age to a day as young Mrs. Suydam.

"And 'twas to this house he brought her the day after they was married," concluded the former Jimmy Legs. "That's a part of it all."

But all the same, one would think that the Admiral might have been very happy after his transfer to the big, jolly house in New York, whither he reported a day or so after he received his orders. It was ever so comfortable. And they were ever so good to him—that pair of young people who had thought it right so to adjust the smoothly running machinery of their lives as to make it take care of the girl's old father. It was very promising that neither the Suydams nor the Admiral were conscious that any such adjustment had been necessary. It would have needed an especially spiteful mischief maker to have even hinted that to "have him" was a burden, or to "live with one's relations" a humiliation. They loved one another, you see. And when one added up the sum of things which made for one's pleasure—!

He had charming rooms all to himself, with the sweep of the Hudson below his windows. The people he met at dinner, the men he encountered at Billy's club, the children—they all made much of him, genuinely fond after ten minutes' acquaintance. Happy? Certainly. He told himself so often enough. And busy besides! The morning papers took an hour or so off the first part of the day; there was always a drive to enjoy; a matinee used up an occasional afternoon; now and then he paid a business call down town or visited the children's school. Why, Theodora's fund of suggestions as to how an admiral on the retired list can use up his time pleasantly and profitably was simply inexhaustible. It was not a week after his change of berth before he had become a rather simple, commonplace, charming old gentleman, with delightful manners and the liveliest interest in the things of the day.

Indeed, it was some vague feeling of dismay that Theodora found it hard to make people even look as if they believed her father to have been a very distinguished officer. May she be pardoned for having made such an attempt at first? But save for a certain well drilled look about the shoulders and an air of having held command rank, there was nothing at all about Admiral Trevor that even suggested the blue water.

Casual acquaintances, missing those sea-dog traits which all of us in our romantic hearts expect of admirals and the like, were inclined to class his commission with those of our million colonels. To the children he was merely a Scheherazade with a white mustache; to others a comfortable fourth for bridge. You would never have heard from him any reference to his Congressional gold medal; it would have needed Mrs. Suydam, say, to tell you how her father was allowed to accept a jeweled sword of honor from the British Admiralty for his rescue during that Atlantic storm of the crew of the sinking cruiser *Northumberland*. For some reason, unaccountable old man that he was, the Admiral ceased directly even to speak of the sea—he whose life was, well, McCarthy knew where. He became merely a civilian. But, as has been said, you would not call him other than happy, there was so much about the old man to make him so.

Especially was there Elsa, who was eleven, and particularly adorable when she was supposed to be in bed and asleep. For she had all Billy Suydam's dark beauty; her dressing-gown was pink; round her softly rebellious hair went a broad pink ribbon; and she talked wisely of life and of books, nestling against one before a dying fire.

"You know you ought not to be here," the Admiral reminded her, opening the door of his study, as they called the room in which he dreamed by day.

"But I forgot to say good-night," was Elsa's answer, her eyes like magic spells, her smile a countersign.

"Only five minutes then," said her grandfather severely.

"As one grows older," returned Elsa, establishing herself in the fold of the strong old arm, "we should make intimate friends of our children. I read that this afternoon in the magazine mamma learns embroidery and entrées for April out of. Were you ever in a battle?"

"Oh, yes!"

"A bloody battle? Like the pictures in the history? Where they charge the rebel breastworks, yelling like demons, or—or rescue the guns, I mean."

"Well, you see, my battles were all



A man and a girl sat close together in an old garden

fought at sea — on ships." (Lord, but those gun pointers on the *Alabama* knew their business! But Semmes was nothing if not a good drill master.)

"O-oh!" this with a note of disillusion.

"But they were bloody enough," the Admiral made haste to explain, for the honor of the service. "On shipboard," he told her, with a certain little air of contentment, "you have to stand and take it."

Elsa nodded understandingly. "You get caught flat aback, and then the enemy rakes you fore and aft, and carries away your mizzen topmast."

"Great Scott!" shouted the Admiral.

"Oh, no, grandfather!" She laid her hand on his arm. "Scott wrote *Ivanhoe*. It was Cooper who wrote about the fights at sea."

"Of course!"

"Don't you adore the 'Pirate?'"

"Tell me about it," he suggested.

She drew up her feet, cuddling them under her gown like two small white kittens. "I thought," said Elsa, "that you might tell a story to *me*."

"But it's your turn to-night."

"What about them?"

"After all," said the old sea-fighter, the medal of honor man, after a little thought, "I believe I'd like to hear again about—what's his name now?"

"Rumpelstiltskin?"

"That's the fellow!"

"But that's a regular baby story!"

"Exactly!" said the Admiral. "I haven't heard it for ever so long." (Thirty years about! She had told it perfectly to some children, who, creeping into the garden after raspberries, had been captured and made into adoring allies. She sat with them in the grass, her white dress spread widely about her. Her hat had blue ribbons. The wind was from the south.)

"How glad I am that nobody knows my name is Rumpelstiltskin," chanted Elsa, coming to the close of the story. "And then the queen was very glad, and—but, grandfather, your eyes are *shut*!"

He drew her closer. He hurt her a little. "I can see better that way sometimes, Elsa."

"Well," said the tale-teller, a little grudgingly, "you're missing all the sparks anyway."

The fire had dimmed down a little. A procession of sparks crept along the back of the fireplace fantastically.

"What do you see in them?" asked the small girl very softly.

"The round world, Elsa."

"And not fairy lamps?" Again the note of disappointment. "The other night you—"

"Fairy lamps!" he repeated.

"Well—!" (They were the restless come and go of the lanterns on the Grand Canal, those sparks, in April; ranged in a line, they were the lights along the Villa Nazionale, west of the Arsenal, where the boats land; clustered for a moment, they were the brightness of Rio or of Yokohama. The throbbing engines are quiet. One is waiting to go ashore). "They are the lights of the land of heart's desire, Elsa."

The sparks went out, all but one bright point of light against the darkness around and behind it. (A ship's riding-light, seen at night across the harbor. She must have slipped in after sundown.)

"And now they're all gone!" said Elsa. Her head lay against his shoulder, and the subtle perfume of her youth rose to him, enveloping him. "But *I'm* still here!" she announced. "Let's pretend something! Let's pretend we were married, and that this—"

"Not to-night!" he whispered, low and quickly. "It's too late, sweetheart. And—and I'm a little tired."

"You?" It was incredible.

"You see," he explained with an effort, "I've been on a long, long journey."

"O-oh!"

And Elsa slipped down from the sofa, feeling exactly as she did after making a wrong response in church.

"Good-night," said the Admiral.

Did his eyes ever have the look of being fixed on something very far away? Perhaps. But one must never seem ungrateful to one's dearest friends—not to a daughter who has her mother's eyes.

"I'm so glad you suggested coming to

stay with us, father," said Theodora, laying her capable hand on his.

"Eh—"

"This is home, you know," she smiled, motherly fashion, quite missing the utter surprise in his tone.

"Oh, yes. Certainly," agreed the Admiral hastily, blushing fire red.

"For every day in the year," she went on happily.

"The—the winter certainly has gone very quickly," was her father's answer.

He rose and walked to the window. Below it stretched the shining river. A big armored cruiser lay there—a Frenchman, sinister in his coat of black and olive gray. The trees along the parkway were enveloped in misty green or pale crimson.

"Just think," he added over his shoulder, "this is the twenty-eighth of May."

"Is it? I can never keep track of dates. She laughed guiltily, deliciously. "Last year I forgot Billy's and my anniversary!"

"Oh, no!" he protested.

"Yes, I did. Billy was awfully mad." And she launched a little tale about meeting Billy and being awfully surprised at his bringing her home some pearls. "All anniversaries are terrible though," she concluded, wearied of her tale before she had properly finished it. "They make me realize how ancient I am growing. Which reminds me that before I get a minute older, I must go and get my duds changed."

"What is it *this* afternoon?" he asked, not looking at her.

His old heart was beating fast. For a certain reason of his own he had counted on being free that afternoon—free and unobserved for several precious hours.

"Father, I'm surprised! Have you forgotten that I promised Mrs. Sibley to bring you to call to-day?"

"At what time?" he asked, after a queer little pause his daughter could not quite understand.

"Half-past four, say?"

"If I'm not here," said the Admiral, "it will be because I'm called—even more urgently than by Mrs. Sibley—elsewhere."

"What a funny thing to say, father!"

"Not a bit!" he assured her, and he took her face between his hands, looking down into her troubled eyes. "And you're not to bother. Understand?"

"But—"

"Captain's orders!" said the old gentleman briefly, and then he walked out of the room, his back very straight.

A moment later Mrs. Suydam heard the front door slam behind him.

"Home!" whispered the Admiral to himself, repeating the phrase his daughter had used so happily, as she believed. "Why, Theodora dear, home is where one *lives*!"

And with that he descended to the subway, to be whirled downtown. Half past two! He had time enough. And it was best to do the deed exactly this way—offhand. It saved so much of Theodora's time. She was the best of all daughters, but it is hard to explain one's preferences to one's benefactors without wounding them.

Once on Forty-second Street he felt easier, for in the confusion of the crowds streaming east and west—all kinds of women, men fagged with too much work or the lack of it—it was unlikely that a figure so inconspicuous as the Admiral always thought himself would catch the eye of even a friend. Disliking any place, in these latter days, where more than two or three are gathered together, the old gentleman joined the crowd on this afternoon with the utmost satisfaction. Craftily keeping close behind two heavy, overdressed, clean shaven men who had turned into the street just ahead of him, he had the satisfaction of getting as far as Fifth Avenue as securely as if navigating in a fog.

The traffic policeman on the crowded crossing blew his whistle abruptly, and the streams of vehicles going north and south stopped. The Admiral stepped down from the curb to cross the street. A block or two more, and he would be safe in the great station, waiting for his train. He was half way across, nearly over, when—

"Admiral!" hailed a big voice from a scarlet and black limousine which trembled at the head of the long file of ve-

hicles headed north. "Admiral! Ahoy there!"

He had to pass directly in front of the car. The door was flung open; out sprang a jolly, well groomed figure, who pounced on the Admiral with a laugh of real affection.

"Rescued!" cried Billy Suydam. "Rescued from the perils of a great city!"

A wicked word was what the Admiral really responded with, but—

"Hello, my boy!" was what he added aloud, with a very creditable smile. "Well met!"

"Where you going?"

"With you. Billy boy, Billy boy," said the old gentleman, leading the way to the car. "I—I've walked all I'm going to to-day."

"Why in thunder do you do your walking down toward the Grand Central Station?" asked Theodora's husband, as the motor started up the avenue.

"Because one has to walk somewhere," replied Theodora's father briskly.

"I knew you in a minute," said Billy, "though I was a little surprised. You ought to go disguised, when you want to dodge the watchful family."

"What an idea!" rejoined the Admiral, with chilling dignity. "May I look at the evening-paper?"

"There's nothing in it," was Billy's warning, as he handed over the newspaper which had been lying on the seat. "Only the usual news of the Riverside burglar. Queer, the police don't catch that fellow."

With which comment he lay back deeper in the cushions, as if at the end of a long and troublesome task, like so many of his brethren after two sentences of conversation.

But for some reason or other, the Admiral read the paper through and through. Concerning an item about the robbery of an apartment house in West Eighty-seventh Street, he remarked to Suydam sagely that the burglar was pretty near their own house.

"Better lock up that tableware you brought down with you, Admiral," laughed the other.

"Burglars never touch family silver. It doesn't look valuable enough," said

the old gentleman after a moment's pause.

Did Suydam color a little? At Theodora's request, the Admiral had brought down with him the few dozens of forks and spoons which had been her mother's. But they were not used much, he noticed, and one day he found the lot returned to his own room. She had really more than she could use, Theodora told him. There came down between him and Theodora's husband, just for a moment, that silence which is deeper than mere wordlessness, which is felt like the closing of a door. Nor all the way back to the house did the Admiral have much to say. He was busy reading the paper. And what held his attention above all else, strange to tell, was the most obscure of the advertisements in the column headed business opportunities. Yet it must have been pretty important, for right under Billy's eye, he tore out that corner of the newspaper and stowed it away in his pocket.

"Next time," quoth the Admiral to himself, as he buttoned his coat, "we'll take no chances."

"You want a costume?" asked the amazingly fat deity of the establishment which had been announced as for sale at a bargain. In the smile she gave her customer, hope struggled gamely against incredulity.

"Yes."

"A masquerade? Yes?" She appraised his necessity with hardly a glance. "Santa Claus, colonial mit a wig, Roman, court gentleman, or yust domino?"

"I don't believe I want to appear as a Roman," demurred the prospective masker.

"A comic!" the lady suggested, clasping her hands in ecstasy. "Yellow Kid, hobo, rube—?"

"The ancient mariner," came back the answer.

"Wie?" There are times when English is utterly inadequate.

"He was a sailor," explained the customer, "and also, as has been wittily observed, the original sidewalk conversation artist."

"Like Joe Weber!" And she smiled—



"They are the lights of the land of heart's desire, Elsa"

of course she did!—at memories of former years.

There followed much ransacking of drawers and trunks which smelt of moth-balls and grease paint; until at length an outfit was got together which might have been appropriate for a yacht captain ashore, or for a warrant officer who had removed all insignia of his rank. And presently one started home with a bundle which Theodora would expect to have explained, unless one had a bit of luck.

In the shadowed part of the block, just after midnight, two plain clothes men from headquarters were talking idly, with long gaps in their whispered conversation. It was their third night of duty in the neighborhood, and each had decided that never had any member of the force been sent out on more foolish service.

"He knows the place is full of bulls these nights," said the elder of the twain. "He'll not come back. He aint no green hand. What's the use o' gumshoein' round when there aint a burglar within a mile o'—Hello!"

The front door of the Suydam house had opened a crack, noiselessly. A man's face appeared, very white against the darkness behind him. Noiselessly he shut the door, and nimbly as a boy he ran down the steps. He carried a suitcase.

"Evenin'," observed the older of the two policemen, as they closed in.

The man swerved sharply aside, to find his arm caught firmly just above the elbow by a strange and heavy hand. The other officer had been ready for him.

"What's all this?"

"What's all *this*?" replied the detective genially. "Oh, we're all right, my friend." And he showed the police badge under his coat. "Kind o' late to go for a walk, aint it?"

"I'm going for a train," the man explained, speaking low and quickly. "I've got to catch the one o'clock. I'm not a burglar, officer."

But the policeman lifted the suit-case. It was pretty heavy, and it jingled a little.

"What's in it?" he asked. "Spoons?"

"Yes. If you want to know."

"What you doin' in that house?"

"Live there. Or—I *did*."

"That's where Mr. William Suydam lives." And the officer nodded to his mate very slightly. "S'pose we go back 'n' ask him, eh?"

But the prisoner drew back. "Not for anything!"

"Hey—?"

"I don't suppose," the man said coolly, looking from one of his captors to another, "that fifty—"

"Fifty nothin'!—"

"A hundred then. I want very much to get to the Grand Central by one o'clock."

"That'll do, I guess." Their grip on his arms tightened; they set him in motion. "So you wont go back and get identified?"

There was only a moment's hesitation. "No!" said the suspect. "I—I'll go with you."

He really did not have much to say about that, for already he had fallen in step with the rapid, heavy gait of his guardians.

"We've got him!" announced the older one, as the prisoner was haled before the desk at the station house.

"Got who?" The lieutenant looked up with professional coolness.

"Me!" said the prisoner suddenly, looking the lieutenant full in the face.

He stood very straight; there was a suspicion of a twinkle in his calm, gray eyes. And as the big lieutenant looked at him in return, there showed the most bewildering series of emotions which have ever ruffled the placid surface of a prosperous policeman's countenance. Indifference, surprise, interest, doubt, disbelief, hesitation, and awful embarrassment played across that good man's face like summer thunder squalls.

"What's the charge?"

"Aw, he's got a bag full of silver, 'n' we caught him right comin' out o' Will'm Suydam's by th' front door. He wouldn't tell his name."

"You did not ask it," remarked the prisoner.

And at the sound of his voice this time the lieutenant began nervously to button his blouse.

"He wouldn't go back 'n' get identified," the detective corrected.

"Because," the captive interposed, yet with a ring to his tones which caught one's attention like the note of a bugle, and with his eyes full on the detective's superior, "I knew that Bill Carson would identify me right here. When a man has such stupendous luck as this," he went on, but to himself, "he had best make use of it, even," and he sighed, "at the cost of some slight prevarication."

The lieutenant invoked his Maker's condemnation upon his own head, fervently.

"Exactly!" agreed the prisoner.

"Captain Trevor!—"

"Bill Carson," rejoined the prisoner affably, with a pleasant condescension. "You were signalman on the *Rappahannock* in '85."

"But—but what?—"

"I was on my way to rejoin my flagship," said the Admiral, helping the apoplectic officer out of his trouble. "Until your men here—in the pursuit of their duty—interrupted me."

"What ship, sir?" The man's eyes narrowed a trifle.

"The good ship *Mon Repos*, Carson," rejoined the Admiral. "She sails to-morrow—this morning."

"But how about this junk in the bag?" asked one of the policeman, who had made short work of opening the Admiral's hand baggage.

He held up an old spoon, whose monogram, once so florid and fine, was a good deal worn and dimmed.

"Discharged!" roared his chief, and coming down from his throne, he threw up his great hand in salute, then held it out timidly, very red indeed. "Thank you for rememberin' me, Admiral."

"I am obliged to you, Carson, for remembering *me*," returned the old gentleman, and then he added, by way of recovering his position perhaps, "Be good enough to call me a taxicab at once."

"All the same—" began the younger of the two detectives.

"You done right, my son," broke in the lieutenant, menacing him with his eye, "but you aint had the advantage of havin' served ten years in the navy. Didn't you never hear of Steve Trevor—?"

And forthwith began the tale of the rescue of the crew from the *Northumberland*.

"But why does he wear them old clothes?"

"Old clothes nothing! What else would Steve Trevor want to wear?" demanded the vice-regent of the precinct. "Can't you tell a navy pea-jacket when you see one?"

The quiet creatures who lived in the old Gregory garden awoke to listen and peer furtively at the unaccustomed man, who, just before the dawn, came down the gravel path leading from the house to the little wharf.

"He is a stranger!" said the new blossomed hollyhocks, standing on tiptoes to see better.

"We remember him," said the roses.

"At any rate, he is of our own race," agreed the other creatures comfortably, sure—for this the flowers can tell—that the stranger was one of those whose hands and thoughts are gentle.

"My friend!" whispered the old apple tree.

"Mine again!" whispered back the man, looking upward through the twisted tracery of the branches, past the delicate beauty of the blossoms.

"Mine—!"

The sun came up; the dance of the day began across the gleaming harbor's floor. The little white cruiser lying to her anchor under the eastern shore became a fairy craft of white and gleaming gold.

"It is morning!" whispered the Admiral to the spirit that lived in the garden. "And here I am. Home again!"

"Forever together!" responded the wind in the apple tree—was it the wind?

"Forever!" said the short little surf at the foot of the garden. "Ah-h!"

"He looked like th' man wot
kicked me little sister"



The Guilty Man

BY ELLIOTT FLOWER

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

I

JIM Raddy was annoyed, not to say disgusted, and with reason: he had been arrested for highway robbery. And even this was not the worst of it. In his own expressive language his predicament was thus described: "I never done it, but they got the goods on me." This was purely figurative, of course; no booty had been found in his possession, but the circumstances were of a nature to make conviction practically certain.

Now, if park benches could testify in court, there was one particular bench that would be able, and doubtless will-

ing, to prove an alibi for Jim Raddy, but, of course, no one ever heard of a park bench qualifying as a witness. And there seemed to be no other possible witness, animate or inanimate, that could help Jim. He had been sleeping, more or less peacefully, under the bench when the crime was committed. His earlier couch had been the bench itself, but a passing policeman had "fanned his feet," (which means that the policeman had played a warm and tingling tattoo with his night-stick on the soles of Jim's dilapidated shoes), and had ordered him to move on. Thereupon Jim had shuffled away, but, having no other place to go, had pres-

ently circled back. This time, thinking to make himself less conspicuous, he sought rest under the bench.

A cry for help was the next thing that forced itself upon his consciousness. He could not be sure, at first, whether it was a dream cry or a real cry, and he was not sufficiently awake to care very much which it was. Then an unpleasant human gurgle, dying away in a gasp, reached his ears, and that roused him.

He crawled out from under the bench and sought the source of this interruption of his slumber. He found it. A man was lying on the grass, beside the gravel walk, face up and with blood flowing from a wound on the side of his head. Jim immediately and hurriedly sought to increase the distance between himself and the unfortunate man. A good Samaritan would have acted differently, but Jim should not be too severely blamed, for he well knew that samaritanism might prove costly for him. The police would put their own interpretation upon his proximity to a man in this plight. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance that he should be elsewhere—very much elsewhere—when the man was found, but, unfortunately, in his haste, he ran right into the arms of the policeman who had "fanned his feet."

Thus it happened that Jim Raddy, quite by accident, was placed in a most disagreeable predicament. It looked bad—oh, very bad! He had been penniless, sleeping on a bench, and, therefore, in desperate need of money; he had been ordered away and had returned; he had been caught fleeing from the place where a wayfarer had been feloniously assaulted; he was a man who had faced police magistrates before, although for vagrancy and misdemeanors rather than for crime. Still, he had a police record that added something to the hopelessness of the situation.

True, the victim had not been robbed, but the motive unquestionably had been robbery, and the fact that the assailant had been frightened away was nothing in his favor. True, also, the victim had not been dangerously hurt, but that fact entitled the assailant to no credit, for the assault had been a brutal one, and it was

more a matter of luck than anything else that it had not proved fatal. So Jim Raddy could see the penitentiary looming up ahead of him.

"They got me," he grumbled bitterly, "an' I never done it. Aint that the limit?"

He expressed himself thus to the lawyer who came to see him. The lawyer, Lucas Kirkham, had come in response to an appeal made to Dan Cassidy, a politician to whom Raddy was occasionally useful. Cassidy had no present use for Raddy, and consequently was not particularly interested in his fate, but there were reasons for not forsaking him altogether. So he had sent Kirkham, a young lawyer whose limited practice and reputation would justify only a modest fee and who might be expected to be grateful for any business put in his way.

"Looks to me like they got him fer fair," explained Cassidy, "but I got to make a bluff at helping him. See what you c'n do, an' send the bill to me."

It will be seen from this that the views of Cassidy and Raddy coincided, and there was little upon which to base a hope in the story that Raddy told.

"If I'd done it," he complained, "I wouldn't have no kick comin', but I never seen the man till after he'd had the side of his head batted in."

"Did he see you?" asked Kirkham.

"Nix, he didn't see nobody to know him," answered Raddy. "They drills him up fer a pipe at me, an' he says it's all so sudden an' mixed up he couldn't tell who hit him. Somebody tries a throttle hold from behind, he struggles, an' then he gets a clip on the head an' don't remember no more."

"That's bad and good," commented Kirkham; "bad that he didn't see who hit him, and good that he didn't see you afterward."

"But they'll send me over anyhow," declared Raddy disconsolately. "They don't need more'n half a case when they git a man like me."

"That's true," admitted Kirkham.

"An' they'll put me away on gen'ral principles."

"Perhaps not."

"Wot's the play?" asked Raddy, quickly.

"Why," said Kirkham thoughtfully, "I think you'd better confess."

Jim Raddy, in his own expressive language, "blew up" instantly, and the things he said to the lawyer were not at all polite. Confession, even when guilty, was not in his line, and to confess to a crime of which he was innocent was preposterous. He didn't expect to escape conviction, in view of the circumstantial evidence and the attitude of the police, but he did expect to have some effort made to lighten the penalty. Not in these words, but to this effect, and in terms unmistakable, did he express himself and the lawyer listened with a tolerant smile that was aggravating. Not the slightest impression apparently, did the tirade make.

"Raddy," said Kirkham imperturbably, when the flow of angry expostulations had dwindled to a rumble, "you confess—make up a good story to fit the facts—and then see what happens."

"They'll pass me out a bunch o' years," objected Raddy.

"Perhaps," returned Kirkham, "and perhaps not. Anyhow, it won't be as big a bunch as they'll pass out if you make a fight that gets the judge and the police and everybody worse down on you than they are now. You haven't a chance to win on the evidence."

"Cassidy's throwin' me down," complained Raddy. "He wants me put away."

"Cassidy told me to do the best I could do for you," declared Kirkham, "and I'm trying to do it."

"In a pig's ear," growled Raddy.

Kirkham shrugged his shoulders. "Suit yourself," he said. "Either I'm your lawyer or I'm not. If I am, you do as I say. If I'm not, I'll quit now."

Facing this alternative, Raddy capitulated.

"Loosen up on the plan," he grumbled, "an' I'll play it any way you say only it don't look good to me."

II

Kirkham, returning to Cassidy, announced that he had thrown up the case.

"What! what! what!" cried Cassidy.

Kirkham, looking Cassidy full in the eye, winked.

"Oh!" said Cassidy.

"Yes," explained Kirkham, "I've thrown up the case. A man is sometimes better off without a lawyer than he is with one, especially if he's going to plead guilty."

Cassidy was puzzled. The wink and the words did not seem to correspond.

"You see," Kirkham went on, "even a judge can't help feeling sorry for a poor devil without either money or friends."

Cassidy nodded. He could understand this much.

"And," added Kirkham significantly, "the prosecution doesn't bother much about a case that isn't going to be fought."

"Sure," agreed Cassidy.

"The easier it looks for the state," remarked Kirkham, "the better it is for us."

"Fine!" exclaimed Cassidy. "But," he added doubtfully, "you said he was going to plead guilty."

"Yes," admitted Kirkham, "*going* to, but lots of us are going to do things that we don't do. He may never have to plead at all."

"Good enough," said Cassidy. "The skate don't amount to much, but gettin' a man out of trouble is always a good play in politics."

"Well, it's up to you to get him out," asserted Kirkham.

"What's that?" returned Cassidy quickly. "I don't mix up with this personally. It won't do."

"Oh, you needn't mix in openly," explained Kirkham, "but I've got to have a few men who'll obey orders."

"What kind?" asked Cassidy.

"Bums," answered Kirkham, "men that won't feel bad if they happen to land in a police station. I don't say they will land there, but they might."

"Let's hear more," said Cassidy.

Kirkham explained his plan in detail.

"Say!" cried Cassidy, when the recital was ended, "you got a great head on you! No trouble about the men you want, either. There's hundreds of 'em would risk thirty days fer a two-dollar bill. I'll



"Why," said Kirkham, "I think you'd better confess"

have the word passed to the lads you want that I'll see 'em through an' settle with 'em if they deliver the goods. It's worth money as a joke."

"And," added Kirkham, "there will be a few quiet tips to pass out to the reporters."

"That's easy fixed," declared Cassidy. "Leave it to me."

III

Ben Petlow, a reporter for *The Chronicle*, received a hint that sent him in haste to Kirkham's office. It did not come from Cassidy—at least, not directly—but Cassidy could probably have told how it reached Petlow. Anyhow, there was promise in it.

"I understand," said Petlow, "that you've thrown up the Raddy case."

"I don't know that you could say I've thrown it up," returned Kirkham, evasively.

"But you were his lawyer, weren't you?"

"I talked the case over with him."

"And wouldn't take it?"

Kirkham shrugged his shoulders. "I gave him some advice," he said.

"What was it?" persisted Petlow.

"If he acts on it," said Kirkham, after a moment of thought, "you ought to be able to get a good story out of him. I don't think I ought to say more than that."

It was quite enough. Petlow started for the door, but stopped suddenly.

"Exclusive?" he asked.

"I guess so," answered Kirkham. "Raddy wouldn't talk to the reporters when he was brought in, and I don't think one of them has been near him since I saw him."

"Keep it bottled up!" pleaded Petlow. "Let me have a beat on it."

"I'll do the best I can," Kirkham promised.

Petlow reviewed the situation, as he understood it, while he was hurrying to the police station. Kirkham had unquestionably thrown up the case and advised the man to plead guilty. That was sensational in itself, and it was a fair inference that there was something more sensational back of it. Raddy, of course, in spite of the advice of his lawyer, would hardly be willing to talk freely, but he could be made to talk. Petlow, with the little information at his command, was sure he could make it appear that he already had the main points of the story, and Raddy would then see the futility of maintaining silence.

But all this mental preparation proved to be quite unnecessary. Raddy made a full confession without any particular urging.

"They got me anyhow," he grumbled, "so wot's the use holdin' back? I done it. I was down an' out an' I had to do it."

Then he told his story. It was a fine story, too. Kirkham had suggested many of the details.

He was, he repeated, down and out: he did not have a cent in his pocket; he had not had a penny to exchange for food for three days; he had no place to sleep. He neglected to state that he had had a few dimes to exchange for drink and had helped himself generously to free lunch, but that, of course, was immaterial. He also neglected to state that one of these dimes, had he chosen to expend it that way, would have bought him a bed for the night, but that was equally immaterial. He was certainly "broke" when he sought the park bench.

And he was even denied the natural privilege of sleep! It was very sad! A policeman had "fanned his feet" and told him to move on. The great, wide world had no resting place for him. Even under the twinkling stars he could not have peace. This was not the way Raddy expressed it, but Petlow was mentally putting the story in some such form. There was a sociological study in it—an illustration of the faultiness of civilization. It presented the essence of a problem with which progressive minds were struggling. A sensational and illuminating cross-section of life among the submerged tenth!

"I drills away," said Raddy, continuing the narrative, "but w'ere was I to go? If they turn me out of the park, what chance is there anywheres else? If they don't let a feller use the sky fer a roof, wot kind of a losin' game is he in? I circles back to the bench, 'cause there aint no other place to go. An' then, w'ile I'm thinkin' it all over an' wonderin' wot's the place I git off at, along comes this lad that I done up. I see him under the light a half block away, an' he looks like he'd lose more money than I'd ever need out of a hole in his pocket an' never miss it. Honest, it bites into me sudden! The price of one o' the cigars he's smokin' would fix me up fer a day. It don't look right that I got to lie out there fer a cop to play shinny with."

"So you crawled out and slugged him?" suggested Petlow.

"I didn't go fer to do it," explained Raddy. "I didn't look to have him put up no fight. I see him playin' with a silver dollar that was big as a house to me,

an' I figgered I could pass my arm under his chin, jerk his top back, an' git the coin. But he was too quick an' strong, so I hit him an' run."

"That's all, is it?" asked Petlow.

"Aint it enough?" demanded Raddy.

"Well, I don't see what there is in it to make Kirkham give up the case," remarked Petlow.

"That skate!" exclaimed Raddy, still mindful of his amazing instructions. "I handed him some back talk when he told me to plead guilty."

"But you're going to do it?"

"They got me," said Raddy, "an' I don't see nuthin' else to do now, but I don't need no lawyer to help me do it. Lawyers that hands out lemons aint in my line. He didn't act like he thought much of the case, anyhow."

"Probably not," agreed Petlow. "It must have looked pretty hopeless. Have you told your story to anybody else?"

Raddy had not, and Petlow derived much satisfaction from that assurance. There was still ample time for others to get it, but it was possible that it might be kept exclusive. The Chief of Police could make that possibility a certainty, if so minded, and the Chief of Police ought to be favorably disposed toward a reporter who put him in possession of a confession of which he had no previous knowledge. Petlow went to see the Chief.

IV

Albert Chester, a reporter for *The Blade*, received a tip that took him down into the "bad-lands" in haste. The tip did not come from Cassidy—at least, not directly—but it is more than probable that Cassidy could have told how it happened to reach Chester.

A part of the city largely given over to resorts of evil repute was known as the "bad-lands." It was a district in which a man with any considerable money in his pocket would be justified in feeling uneasy. Indeed, it was currently reported that so small a sum as a silver half-dollar, injudiciously displayed, had been known to "start something" that ended in the mysterious disappearance of the coin and the facial disfigurement of the

original possessor. But Chester, being a reporter, was well able to take care of himself, and he had heard that there was a man down there, exuding the bravado of liquor, who boasted that it was he who had committed that assault in the park.

This man, strangely enough, was just where Chester had been told he would be found, and he was still boastful. He had done it, he proclaimed. The police, as usual, had arrested the wrong man. They always did. They wouldn't be able to get the right man if he had a label on him. They wouldn't know what to do with him if they did get him. They were dubs. That was why he, Ed Pell, commonly known as "Big-Nose Ed," had no hesitation in saying that he "slugged the guy in the park." He could "put it all over" any policeman that ever "put on harness," anyhow.

Chester led him to a back room, ordered a drink for him, and found him garrulous and unsuspecting. It was wonderful how unsuspecting he was. It never occurred to him, apparently, that the stranger who questioned him so closely was a reporter. Chester attributed his success to the drinks he ordered, and he was not altogether in error in this. "Big-Nose Ed" prolonged and amplified the story because of these drinks, and was prepared to furnish additional details as long as the generosity of his inquisitor warranted. It was a good story, too. Kirkham had seen to that.

This, it proved, was no common case of an assault to commit robbery. On the contrary, there was no particular thought of robbery.

"I aint sayin'," said the big nosed one, "that the guy's wad wouldn't have been took if the thing had worked out right—a wise one don't pass up easy money that comes his way—but I wasn't lookin' fer the dough."

"Then what was the object?" asked Chester.

"R-revenge!" snarled Pell.

"What!" cried Chester.

"R-revenge!" repeated Pell. "He looked like the man wot kicked me little sister."

"Kicked your little sister!"

"That's wot."

"Tell me about it."

"W'y, she was playin' in the road w'en a buzz-wagon comes along an' has to stop quick to keep from runnin' her down. It makes the man mad, an' he speaks to her nasty. She talks back, like a kid will, an' don't git out o' the way quick enough to suit him, so he jumps down and kicks her."

"That was a brutal thing to do," declared Chester.

"I seen it all from the house," went on Pell, "but he gits away 'fore I kin reach him. But I don't fergit it."

"Naturally not."

"It's up to me to hand him one the next time I see him."

"And you did?"

"No," replied Pell, regretfully, "I got the wrong one."

"This wasn't the man?"

Pell shook his head. "He's a ringer fer him all right," he said, "an' I don't have a fair look at his face 'fore I hit him, but it aint the man. I'm sorry I done it. I follered him six blocks fer a chance to hand him one an' never see his face fair till it was all over. Then I skips."

"But," objected Chester, "if you were intent only on revenge, why did you try the throttle hold first?"

"Me!" exclaimed Pell. "I never done it. I jest comes up behind, when he reaches a good place, an' lands some brass knuckles on the side of his head. That's all I done."

It was a good story—a bully story. The Chief of Police, if advised in time to make the arrest, ought to be willing to put the man away where the other reporters would not find him. The Chief should be well disposed toward a re-

porter who gave him such valuable assistance, and the Chief's favor was worth having. Chester went to see the Chief.

V

Jack Donovan, a reporter for *The Star*, received a tip that sent him scurrying to an address in the slums. Perhaps Cassidy—but never mind that.

Donovan did not have the luck of Chester, for he had to follow his man from place to place; but the story, as he understood it, warranted strenuous efforts to secure the details. The police, it seemed, had made a dreadful mistake in arresting Raddy for the assault in the Park. Another was the guilty man. The other's name was Pete Dorsey, and he admitted his guilt. Indeed he was so distressed by the plight of Raddy that he was inclined to give himself up.

This was, in the words of Donovan, "a lovely story." It was, of course, important that Dorsey should not give himself up before the paper went to

press—that is, too late for rivals to use the news—but Donovan thought he could arrange that with little difficulty, if he succeeded in getting the story.

Dorsey was finally located in a cheap restaurant. He was in an unpleasant frame of mind, apparently, but, having finished his "ham and," he admitted that a "schooner" might cheer him up a little. So they journeyed to "The Dutchman's" at the corner, where Donovan invested in two beers.

There was no trouble about the story. Dorsey, although morose, made no at-



- A.W.D. -

Gregg hesitated in the corridor

tempt to withhold any of the details. What was the use? He wasn't going to let another man be "put over" for what he'd done, so there was no reason for concealment.

"If they didn't have the goods on him so strong," he said, "I'd keep mum an' chance his gettin' off, but they'll send him up sure if I don't stop it. I can't stand fer that."

Considering the man and his environment, this was a remarkable exhibition of unselfish devotion to principle—to the only honor code of which he had knowledge. The story was certainly good for a big head on the first page.

"Let me announce it first," urged Donovan. "I'll put it in a way that may help you."

Dorsey acquiesced gloomily, and suggested another beer.

"I never done anything like that before," he declared, after he had again refreshed himself.

"I can readily see that," returned Donovan. "The way you look at the situation now is proof of it. What was the trouble?"

"Rent," said Dorsey.

"What?" cried Donovan.

"Rent," repeated Dorsey, sighing heavily. "It was us to the pavement if I didn't put up the coin."

"The landlord was going to throw you out?"

"Sure," said Dorsey; "an' the old woman a cripple, at that."

"You mean your mother?"

Dorsey nodded, drank the rest of his beer, and looked at the empty glass with an intentness that induced another order.

"Heartless brute!" exclaimed Donovan. "Such men help to make criminals."

"I lost me job," Dorsey went on, "an' I had to have money or hit the street."

"But how did you happen to be in the park?" asked Donovan. "That's a long way from here."

"I was tryin' fer a job," explained Dorsey.

"At night?"

"Sure. It was a night watchman's job." Dorsey did not look like a man who would have much chance to get any kind

of a watchman's job, but Donovan let that pass. "They turned me down," Dorsey continued, "an' I goes over to the park to think. Then I sees this guy, an' it's all off. I has a brain-storm."

"A what?"

"Brain-storm—me nut goes wrong—I'm crazy."

"Oh, yes."

"I got to save the old woman, so I picks up a club, an' I don't know nothin' more till it's all over."

"And you didn't get the money?"

Dorsey shook his head. "But the agent's give me two days more," he said "an' the old woman's got all but a dollar-fifty saved up."

Donovan contributed the needed dollar and a half. The story justified it. Aside from its newspaper value, the Chief of Police would unquestionably be grateful for a word or two of advance information, and the good will of the Chief of Police was worth having. Donovan went to see the Chief.

VI

Ben Petlow, of *The Chronicle*, slipped into the office of the Chief of Police through the private entrance. Petlow was one of the favored mortals who were permitted to use that entrance. He found the Chief alone, and he told him the story of Raddy's confession.

"Good!" grunted the Chief. "I better give him a chance to swear to it while he's feelin' that way."

"But you'll protect my story," urged Petlow.

"Sure," promised the Chief.

Thereupon he telephoned Dillon, the prosecuting attorney, and to the station at which Raddy was held, and arranged to have lawyer and prisoner meet in his office.

Albert Chester, of *The Blade*, appeared a few minutes later. Chester knew just where the Chief could find the man who had committed the assault in the park.

"So do I," grunted the Chief. "I got him locked up."

"No," said Chester, "that isn't the man."

The Chief looked surprised.

"The guilty man," declared Chester, "is a fellow known as 'Big-Nose Ed.' His last name is Pell. I've got his confession."

"You what!" cried the Chief.

"I've got the whole story," said Chester, "and it's a peach. Thought I'd tip it off, so you can arrest him, and don't forget, it's my story."

"What's bitin' you?" demanded the Chief, disgustedly. "The man we got has confessed."

It was Chester's turn to be startled, and he was. But he recovered himself quickly.

"There must be some mistake," he insisted. "I tell you, this man owns up to everything."

"So does the other," said the Chief.

"It's an extraordinary story."

"So's the other," said the Chief.

"Anyhow," persisted Chester desperately, "you'd better hear what he says. I can make him talk."

"All right," said the Chief, "I'll have him brought in."

Then, after listening to a brief summary of the tale, he ordered the arrest of Pell and telephoned for the victim of the assault to come to his office.

Jack Donovan, of *The Star*, entered while he was puzzling over this annoying complication. Donovan was in such evident good spirits that it made the Chief peevish.

"All I want from you," said the Chief "is just one yawp that you've found the guilty man in the park assault case."

"Who told you?" asked Donovan in astonishment.

"Get out of here!" yelled the Chief.

"But he's confessed," explained Donovan.

"Get out, get out, I tell you!" roared the Chief. "Skip! Skiddoo! Get a move on! I got two confessions already."

"What!"

"Two, count 'em, two. I don't need any more."

"There must be some mistake," expostulated Donovan. "This man owns up to everything."

"Sure he does! They all do!"

"It's an amazing story."

"They all are."

"This man's going to give himself up."

"What's that!" cried the Chief, becoming less belligerent. "That's a new gag. Spring it."

Thus encouraged, Donovan told his story, and the Chief listened moodily.

"You'd better talk to him anyhow," urged Donovan in conclusion.

"Sure!" agreed the Chief sarcastically.

"Sure thing! If there's any more guilty men, trot 'em out! I'd like to see the whole million of 'em! But," he added, "I can't play favorites in this, so I'll have your man brought in, too."

Three contradictory confessions were enough to worry even a policeman, and Dillon, when he arrived, found the Chief bewildered and irritable. Dillon, as the legal representative of the community in such matters, immediately had the problem unloaded upon him, but he could do very little with it, although he thought there would be no difficulty in arriving at the truth when they had the three men before them.

Raddy was the first to be brought in, and he held unwaveringly to the main points of his original story. Pell and Dorsey, when they arrived, did the same, although Pell would not talk freely until convinced that the facts he had previously given were in the possession of the police. Their tales differed in minor details from those they had told earlier, but there were no discrepancies of vital importance. Each confessed that he was the guilty man.

"And what d'ye think of that?" growled the Chief, toying with a paper-weight that lay on his desk.

They were questioned separately at first, and there was only time for each to tell his story briefly before Fulmer, the victim, arrived. Then, at Dillon's suggestion, they were brought in together and instructed to repeat their stories to Fulmer and the Chief's stenographer. They did so. Having confessed twice already, what else could they do? Besides, their instructions left nothing to their discretion.

Fulmer, his head swathed in bandages, listened without comment. The Chief caressed the paper-weight in a way that



"All I want from you is just one yawp that you've found the guilty man"

made the prisoners nervous. It seemed quite possible that they might have to dodge.

"Well, what do you make of it?" was the query that Dillon finally put to Fulmer.

"Why, I didn't take a silver dollar or any other coin from my pocket at any time," answered Fulmer, "so that man," pointing to Raddy, "is a liar. And I never smoke, so he's a liar again. Then I was certainly throttled before I was hit, so that man," pointing to Pell, "is also a liar. And he couldn't have followed me six blocks, for I had just come from my home, which was only two blocks away, so he's a double liar. Then, the fellow who hit me had a jagged stone in his fist, not a club, so that man," pointing to Dorsey, "is another liar."

The Chief scowled menacingly at the three and then turned to Dillon.

"What's the answer?" he demanded.

"We can't go into court," remarked Dillon, "with three men, all convicted liars, confessing to a crime that only one could have committed."

"No," agreed the Chief.

"So it isn't easy to pick out the answer off-hand," said Dillon, "but we may find it among the stenographer's notes. Just have him read them over slowly."

VII

Nat Gregg, popularly known as "Groggy," stood irresolutely in front of a door that bore the inscription, "Chief of Police. Private." That would do as well as any other entrance to police headquarters.

Gregg was discouraged — hungry, thirsty, weary, and without money. Luck was against him. He had tried to beg and had been given a Charity Organization Society card. He had "swiped" a lady's handbag and had found therein, in addition to samples, recipes and memoranda, exactly three cents. He had held up a dude and secured only a package of cigarettes. In desperation, he had waylaid a man in the park, had been forced to slug him when he resisted, and, being frightened away, had failed to get any booty.

The inside of a jail where he would

have food and a place to sleep, was beginning to look good to Gregg. And he might make what he termed "a sympathetic play" by giving himself up to save an innocent man.

A moment or two Gregg hesitated in the corridor, then opened the door and slouched in.

Three men, each under the guard of a policeman, stood near the door. A man with a bandaged head sat a short distance away. The Chief, his stenographer and another man had their heads together over the Chief's desk.

Gregg shuffled toward him. "Say Chief," he said, "I come to give myself up."

"What's that?" cried the Chief, straightening up with a jerk. "What you done?"

"It was me that slugged the guy in the park—"

Gregg dodged just in time to let the paper-weight crash through the ground glass of the door behind him. Then he retreated—hastily. It seemed to him as if a dozen men were trying to hurl themselves upon him, but he reached the corridor, made record time to the street, and lost himself in the crowd.

The Chief stopped the policemen who were starting in pursuit.

"Let him go!" he ordered. "Let 'em all go!"

He turned on the three prisoners.

"Get out!" he roared, reaching for another missile. "Get out, you infernal liars!"

He hastened them somewhat with the toe of his boot as they went through the door.

Then he faced Dillon and Fulmer.

"Got anything to say about it?"

Dillon had nothing to say; he was glad to be relieved of the problem.

Fulmer shifted uneasily in his chair.

"Chief," he remarked finally in a deprecatory way, "the man that tried to hold me up has a broken thumb. I didn't remember it until I saw that fellow put his hand up to guard his head when you threw the paper-weight at him. He was the guilty man."

The Chief said—

But never mind that.

A Knight Aviant

BY EDWARD BOLTWOOD HULL

FIRST came a sickening diminution in the deafening "whirr" of the motor, then an irregular burst of speed, and finally a jumbled increase in the palpitating beats of the engine. Richard Garrabrant pulled one lever with his right hand and then pushed another with his left with a desperate energy which suggested fear, but it was too late. There came one final gasping puff, and the engine stopped.

Swooping like a bird, the *aéroplane* shot down out of the moist upper air, grazed the tops of menacing fir-trees, and landed with a surprising gentleness upon what appeared to be the roof of a second story piazza.

"Oh, ho! What have we here?" exclaimed the aviator as he lifted himself from his seat. For some time before the stopping of the engine the *aéroplane* had been flying through a dense mist so that the descent upon the moist tin roof was a surprise in which were mixed pleasure and a certain degree of trepidation — joy that the landing had been accomplished so easily and fear as to the consequences of his intrusion literally *on* the private property of another.

Garrabrant stood still and listened. There was no sign of life at any of the three dormer windows which looked out upon the piazza roof. He didn't know whether to be pleased or not.

"It would make it a little less embarrassing if they'd come out and invite me in, so that it wouldn't be necessary to knock at the third story," he mused, stroking his mustache. He turned to look at the setting sun which was forcing its crimson and orange rays through the mist. "I wonder how one knocks at third floor windows anyway. As far as I can see there's—"

"Neither knocker nor electric bell." A clear feminine voice at the window directly behind him made him jump.

He turned quickly.

"Oh!"

"Oh!"

"Oh!"

"Dick Garrabrant! What in the name of all that's holy or unholy brought you here?"

"That did."

The aviator made a graceful gesture of his right hand in the direction of the outstretched canvas of the biplane.

"But, Sally—"

"And what may *that* be, Dick?"

"That's the *Sarah Truesdell, No. 2*. She's built on the very latest lines—Nineteen-ten model, you know. Please notice the grace—"

"The *Sarah Truesdell, No. 2*? Dick Garrabrant, how dared you name her that? Don't you know that I told you I'd never speak to you again?"

"Oh yes, I remembered, but what had that to do with it? Really I can't see." He turned from tinkering with the refractory engine. "But, I say, wont you ask me in, instead of standing there half in and half out of the window and scolding me? Just before you spoke I was about to go through the 'eeny, miny, mow' business to make up my mind which door—window, I mean—I'd knock at. I'm glad you settled that. May I—"

"Why no, of course not." A bright crimson shot over the girl's face from the white of her throat to the piled up auburn hair above her head. "This isn't the front hall. This is my room."

"Oh!"

"You know it isn't customary—"

"Oh yes, I know that—but what am I going to do? I suppose each of these grottoes contains some other nymph equally proper. By the way, what is this, anyway? Where am I?" He pulled a cigaret case from his pocket. "If I mayn't come in, may I smoke?" The girl nodded her head. "Thank you. Now for my questions. Where are we, Sally?"

The girl hesitated a moment. "This

is the Charltons'—the Sam Charltons'. You see—"

"What! Teddy Charlton's uncle's?" He, too, paused a moment while he toyed with his cigaret. "Oh, I understand. Then it's a go, is it?"

Sarah Truesdell blushed again, but this time there was a little fire of anger in the color.

"No," she snapped. "It's not a 'go,' as you elegantly phrase it, Mr. Richard Garrabrant. I'm going now."

The auburn head was withdrawn quickly and a hand was raised to lower the window.

"Oh, I beg pardon, Sally. Don't," he implored as the window started to come down. It paused half way. "Really, I didn't mean to be fresh. I'm awfully sorry. Wont you come out and look over the biplane? Never saw one before, did you? Well? You'd better throw a cloak over your shoulders, Sally, as it's damp." The girl's brown eyes were turned towards him questioningly for an instant and he added hurriedly, "Oh, I'll be good, I promise."

For a minute or two the head was withdrawn while certain preparations were evidently being made, but presently Sarah Truesdell reappeared covered from head to foot in a long evening cloak.

"Here, give me your hand. Where are your manners, Dick? Now, throw away that horrid cigaret or I wont come a step further. I'm all dressed up."

"All right. Now, Sally, give me your flipper. There, now jump," and in half a second she stood beside him on the roof. "So you are," he exclaimed. "dressed up, I mean. What's going on to-night—dinner or dance?"

"Both. The Willeges in Pendlenox are giving us a dinner with a very grand dance to follow."

"Us? Who's that—you and Teddy?"

The little satin slippered foot came down ringingly on the tin of the roof.

"No, Dick, I say 'no.' Now don't ever talk that way again. It's in bad taste, and besides there never has been, there never will be, there never can be, anything in that."

"Good. Look here, Sally, this is what we call the—"

"Good, why 'good,' I'd like to know?"

"Why, don't you see, Sally, then I—"

"Not at all, Dick. That doesn't follow and the sooner you understand that the better. Now show me the aëroplane. How long have you had it?"

"Just a week. I haven't had her long enough to have had many adventures yet. I came over from Killurin this afternoon in just an hour, which is pretty good going, isn't it? I got all mixed up by the fog and was wondering what I'd do when the engine stopped and landed me right at your door."

"Window, Dick."

"Yes, window. Here, sit here, Sally. That's the passenger's seat. The aviator—that's me—sits here. If you want to start it—she's out of order now, you understand—you pull this lever. So."

A noise like a propeller out of water responded to the pull.

"Oh!" came from Sarah Truesdell as she seized the arms of her seat more firmly.

The center dormer window shot up and a gray dowager head was thrust out. Upon the fat rosy face was written an alarmed surprise of startling proportions. Then with a noise like an automobile, a motor boat, and a sleigh upon frosty snow the biplane shot forward along the roof and, with a heart breaking drop which carried it half way to the earth below, it darted off the roof and out into the damp moist air.

"Where—where are you going?" screamed the dowager.

"Oh, oh, oh!" was the girl's reply in shrill *staccato*.

"It's all right," yelled the man trying to make his voice carry above the racket of the engine. "I didn't suppose she'd work. I'm not quite on to her yet, you see."

"Yes, I see," murmured the passenger to herself.

For the next few minutes Garrabrant was too busy navigating the biplane between the tree tops to the safer upper air to say anything, but when finally he had reached a position where the distant hills alone impeded the vision he turned half around in his seat and

leaning toward his companion shouted,

"It's fun, isn't it?"

"No."

"Oh, you'll get to like it."

"I never shall."

"Yes, you will. Feel that swoop."

The *aéroplane* was soaring higher and higher, rising in great curves. The air rushing by tugged at Sarah's cloak, bellying it into half a dozen little semi-spheres about her figure and tugging frantically at stray wisps of her dark red hair.

"You'll have to give me the directions," shouted the man.

"What do you mean, Dick?"

"Why, I'm going to take you to the Willeges'—in Teddy's place. You don't mind, do you? And where is the Willeges'?"

The look Garrabrant received for this piece of audacity might have meant, "I don't know whether I mind or not." But at any rate Sarah pointed. "It must be right behind that hill ahead of us. It's about four or five miles by the road. That's the one we usually take—the one lying to our right." She stretched her slim arm before Garrabrant as she pointed. Then suddenly she exclaimed, "Why, there's the Charltons' motor now, just behind us! While you were cutting capers in the air they must have been gathering the whole family for the pursuit." With a sly glance at her companion she added: "And Teddy's driving."

The *aéroplane* responded with an added burst of speed.

"I think they're gaining on us," she went on mischievously.

The roar of the engine increased twofold. Garrabrant looked below him and made out the scudding car with its half dozen occupants hastening along the road. All eyes but Teddy Charlton's were fixed upon the flying *aéroplane* two hundred feet above them. His seemed glued to the road ahead of him. Garrabrant saw the dowager head tilted back to an impossible angle while, by the imprecatory gestures of the plump arms, he judged that he was being invited, nay commanded, to stop.

He laughed.

"What are you laughing at, you

stupid man? Here we are in mortal peril of our lives, and you laugh."

She made as if to stamp her foot.

"Don't, don't," implored the aviator, "you might strike some lever. Flash your eye instead, it's safer. Besides, I didn't mean any harm by my laugh. I was merely thinking that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line."

The automobile, which had been gaining on them for some time, was now, by a detour in the road, forced far to the right.

"It's an unfair advantage, Dick."

"That may be, but I just want to be able to welcome Teddy at the Willeges', that's all."

The roar of the engine made conversation hard, and for some time they went on in silence. Hills and dales, brooks and even a quiet winding river passed beneath them. The undulating country seemed to rise and fall like the waves of the ocean, while ever the roaring, hissing biplane beat its way on and through the rushing, singing air.

"That's the Willeges' there, isn't it?" Garrabrant asked presently, pointing to a huge country house about a mile ahead, "the one with the big open lawn, I mean?"

"Yes, that's it," responded Sarah almost sulkily.

"What a splendid place to land! I say, Sally—"

"What, Dick?"

"If I beat that fellow to the finish—"

"That fellow!" she interrupted haughtily. "Do you mean Theodore?"

"Why, yes. Well, if I beat the Honorable Theodore Charlton to the Willeges', will you—that is, will the court—reopen the case?"

"I don't know what you mean, Dick? Besides they're gaining on us pretty fast as it is."

"Hang it, Sal, yes, you do. I know I said I'd drop the subject, and never ask you again, but how in thunder do you expect a fellow to keep that kind of a promise? Sally, you certainly are about the—"

"Stop—stop—stop! Until you've won your race anyway. I simply won't listen

—now." She covered her ears with two white hands.

"Hold on, Sal, for Heaven's sake, or you'll never get there, even if I do."

The great country house, with its imposing terraced front and hundred gables, seemed approaching through the golden twilight at a tremendous rate.

"It's rather like moving pictures, isn't it?" ventured Sarah, as if by way of safer conversation.

"Only in moving pictures the house, or the locomotive, or whatever it may be, always turns aside just as you're about to run into it. In this case—"

"Oh, Dick, don't talk like that. I'm scared enough as it is. Promise me one thing—"

"All right, anything in reason. What is it?" He cast one more glance at the motor-car, still some way behind them. "What is it?" he added as Sarah hesitated.

"Well, Dick, if we do get there first—if you do win the race—promise me you'll give up the *Sarah Truesdell, No. 2*."

The man's eyes snapped joyfully. "Right O! I'll—I'll get rid of her."

They were already over the great half mile of lawn. The motor-car was just turning into the gravel drive which skirted it, and was coming at a rate which approached sixty miles an hour, the muffler out, the engine wide open, the passengers yelling, the dowager gesticulating.

Even Sarah Truesdell seemed to feel the enthusiasm.

"I think we're going to win, Dick," she panted.

The aeroplane, swinging in a great circle, came lower and lower as she approached the terraces.

"Careful of the oak tree, Dick," the girl cautioned, for a huge oak tree standing on the lowest terrace stood almost in their path.

Upon the terrace a dozen dinner guests in evening clothes stood waiting and watching in curious surprise.

Suddenly the engine once more gave that peculiar diminuendo in its noisy "whirr," which earlier in the afternoon had denoted trouble.

Garrabrant softly swore.

"Oh—oh—oh!" screamed the girl.

The aeroplane seemed for an instant to pause, to stand balanced upon the top of an aerial curve, as if debating whether to go up or down, and then, as if rushing to the arms of a lover, shot into the branches of the oak.

A rending noise like the tearing of silk, a hundred cracking joints, a burst of blue smoke from the expiring engine, marked the ending of the biplane. Garrabrant and his companion sat unharmed upon their two seats far up among the leaves, almost hidden from the ground.

"Quick, Sally, put your foot on that branch; there, take my hand; now reach across here. Oh, hurry! The Charltons are almost here."

With such exhortations the young man brought Sarah Truesdell down into the group of waiting Willeges and their friends.

The automobile was just making the last curve in the drive not a hundred yards away.

"Oh, hello, Willege!" spoke Garrabrant, handing Sally down from the last low bough. "We came over before the others to tell you the news. Sally and I—"

"Stop—Dick!"

"What's the matter, Sally? I thought—"

The girl melted. "Let me tell it. Mr. Garrabrant and I are going to be married."

"What!" shouted the excited dowager from the now stationary motor-car, "you and Mr. Garrabrant are going to be married!"

"Yes, Mrs. Charlton."

"And how about my The—"

"And Teddy," spoke Dick Garrabrant softly but in a tone that made even the dowager stop. "And, Teddy, I've a present for you. You can have the *Sarah Truesdell, No. 2*," and he jerked his thumb toward the top of the oak tree.

Then turning to the girl beside him, he added very low so that she alone heard him:

"Nothing could ever make me give up Number One, you know."



Duane Croissant—Bankrupt

The Bankrupt

Dorothy Dacres Takes a Fling at a Financial Fraud

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

Author of "Sealed Lips," "A Sudden Jolt," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY JAY HAMBIDGE

I WANT to tell you," remarked Chandler Lefferts, member of the local bar, "that the law business is a fake. It's no good. Take me."

Dorothy Dacres, his sister in the law, smiled genially.

"But I don't want to take you, Chan," she answered.

"Look at me, then," he went on. "Here I am, twenty-eight years old, decent, respectable, don't chew, drink, or swear—"

Dorothy held up her hand. "Same here," she murmured, "save as to the— the swear—and the twenty-eight. Go on."

"The law," persisted Lefferts, "is *sui*

generis—of its own kind. It differs from anything and everything else in the world. People have got to have doctors, dentists, civil engineers—they can't get along without 'em. But they don't have to have lawyers, and the result is, that they don't have 'em, except when they can afford to, except when they've got a pocket full of money to spend on 'em—"

"Or," suggested Dorothy, "when they haven't got a cent, which is more often the case."

"You bet," growled Chan, "if your clients don't pay, what are you going to do? A doctor can sue and a dentist can sue, but what jury is going to give a ver-

dict for a lawyer if he sues? And there you are. We of the scattering business are ground between the upper and the nether millstones all the time. Hang it, I don't believe I'll ever have enough to marry you on."

Dorothy rose. "Wouldn't do you any good if you had, Chan," she retorted. She held out her hand. "Time you trotted back to your office, I reckon. I had a bully lunch, you know. To-morrow, my treat, Dutch Jakes."

For just one instant she drew near to him and looked into his eyes.

"Say, Chan," she whispered.

"Yes," he gulped.

She threw back her head with adorable gaucherie. "Chan," she went on, her warm grip tightening on his hand, "you wouldn't leave the law if you could—you know that. Wild horses couldn't drag you from it, could they?"

He returned her glance. "You bet your life they couldn't," he confessed.

For one moment he drank in the full glory of her as she stood there, quivering, wide-eyed, alert. And then he turned to go.

"Hold on," he said in a low voice, coming back again, "there's some one knocking at the door."

Dorothy groaned and sank into her revolving chair.

"Dear me," she said, "the only people who ever take the trouble to knock on lawyers' doors are the people without any money and with lots of trouble. The others walk right in. And yet," she added, her face softening, "I can't turn away those who knock. Come in!" she cried. "Come in!"

The door opened, and a woman entered—a young woman, a pretty woman, but poor, so very poor. And at her side there toddled a clean but ragged little imp of three or four. The woman stood for one instant looking from Dorothy to Lefferts, then back again to Dorothy.

"I—I want to see the—the woman lawyer," she declared.

Lefferts bowed. "Not guilty, I assure you," he exclaimed.

The woman pressed toward Dorothy. "I've been to all the good men lawyers in the town," she cried, "and—"

"Wait a bit," said Lefferts, "you haven't been to me."

Dorothy snickered. "All the good ones, Chan," she reminded him.

"I'd better go," said Chan. He did.

Dorothy motioned to a chair, and the woman sank into it. Dorothy seized a yellow pad and placed it on her knee.

"Now, madam," she exclaimed, "just fire ahead."

Her new client drew her hand across her face. "I'm tired," she sighed, "tired. So very tired."

She straightened up then, and looked Dorothy in the face, and Dorothy was startled, on the instant, to perceive that the woman, for all her shabbiness, was one of refinement.

"Go on," she said.

The other drew a long breath. "You can talk about it all night, Miss Dacres," she exclaimed suddenly, "but it comes down to just one thing, and only one—I have been robbed of fifteen thousand dollars—every cent I had—"

Dorothy held her pencil poised in air. "Who's the thief?" she demanded.

The woman nodded. "Duane Croissant," she declared.

"What?" cried Dorothy. "Croissant—the young—sport, here in town?"

She pursed her lips.

"Well," she conceded, "I'm not so much surprised. When did he steal this money? How did he steal it? Give me the details, quick."

"Five years ago," the woman answered.

Dorothy groaned. "Five years! And you've let all this time go by?"

"They all say that," sighed her client. "But let me tell you how it happened, please. My husband was a man named Mercer Train."

Dorothy's eyes opened wide. Mercer Train! She had known Mercer Train; everybody knew Mercer Train while he lived. He had been a prosperous real-estate and insurance broker here in town, with just a dash of sport about him. And this woman, with her clothes fading from her shred by shred, with her boy almost in tatters, was Mercer Train's wife.

The woman perceived Dorothy's surprise.

"Oh, yes," she explained, "it's no wonder; for two whole years I've had nothing—literally nothing. I was a Philadelphia girl, Miss Dacres, an orphan. And—I've got nothing in the world save," she clutched the mite suddenly to her, "save *him*."

Dorothy's eyes blinked. "I envy you, at that," she returned softly. "Go on. Your first name is?"

"Helen—Helen Train," responded the young widow. "And when my husband died he left me fifteen thousand dollars, his insurance. Nothing else. This Duane Croissant was a—a friend of his."

Dorothy's eyes narrowed. "And a friend of yours?" she chanced.

The woman flushed. "Yes," she admitted. "You may as well know the whole story. He *did* make love to me after Mercer's death. Yes, you're right. And I let him—let him. And I'll tell you why. Can you understand something—can you understand a woman who wants to be liked—who must be liked—just that—must have somebody care for her—can you understand?"

Dorothy turned and glanced out the window. "I think I can," she answered softly.

The woman edged up to the desk.

"Well, this Duane Croissant—it was a long, long while before I could make myself understand that it was my fifteen thousand dollars that he liked—I—I gave it to him to invest. That's all. He spent it, every cent."

"You can prove this?" queried Dorothy.

Her client nodded.

"It's a steal, all right," admitted the attorney. "Well, why didn't you—why is it that no lawyer in this town will take your case?"

The woman opened her time worn leather shopping-bag, and drew therefrom a slip of paper.

"There's the check for fifteen thousand that I gave him five long years ago," she said.

Once more she placed her hand against her forehead. Then she handed over another slip of paper.

"There—there's the *note*," she faltered, "the promissory note he gave me

three years ago, when I threatened to arrest him—"

"*Stop!*" cried Dorothy.

She struck the desk smartly with her knuckles. Impatiently she fluttered the note in her hand.

"Why will you people wait until it's too late, I'd like to know?" she insisted. "The time to have come to me or any other honest lawyer, was when your husband died—when you *had* the fifteen thousand dollars. Listen! Do you know what you did when you took this note?"

The woman bowed her head.

"They all tell me," she assented, "that I—I waived the crime—that I couldn't hold him for embezzlement—that I must sue him on the note. But, listen, Miss Dacres," she pleaded, "can't you understand? I thought that his giving me the note made my position stronger, not weaker. Besides, he paid me interest on the note for one whole year." Her chin quivered. "Since then, for the last two years, Junior and I—Oh," she cried, "is there no way out of this, Miss Dacres? No way out?"

Dorothy leaned across her desk. "Now listen to me, Mrs. Train," she said, "I'm going to tell you just what every other lawyer has already told you. When this man stole your money, you could have reached him through the police-courts, or you could have arrested him in a civil action—understand? That would have brought the money; then was the time to strike. But when you did, as you say you did, waived the tort—we call it a 'tort,' because you took the note—you changed the nature of his obligation from a steal to a debt, and you accepted interest on the debt. And you can't arrest for debt. But you can *sue* for debt, and you can get judgment on this note; and if Duane Croissant has property, you can get the money. If he hasn't—"

Helen Train, her client, stopped her.

"Maybe," she faltered, "this would have some bearing—"

She passed over a printed clipping from a newspaper, and, as she did so, it seemed as if her last shred of hope was gone.

"I—I got it through the mail."

Dorothy seized it with avidity and read

it with interest. Then she struck the desk again with her knuckles.

"Bankruptcy!" she muttered. "He's gone into bankruptcy and this is a formal notice of a meeting of his creditors." She shook her head. "No wonder," she went on, "that every lawyer in town has turned you down. I don't suppose there's a chance to get a ten-cent piece out of the whole thing—Wait a bit, now, wait a bit."

Once more she read the notice through, and, at the bottom, noted for the first time the name of the bankrupt's counsel.

"Llewellyn Llandgraff," she murmured. "So Llandgraff is Croissant's lawyer." She clicked her teeth.

"I know this Llewellyn Llandgraff. I had a run in with him once—a big run in. He doesn't practice much in the bankruptcy courts."

She closed her eyes for an instant. Then she seized the telephone and called up the referee in bankruptcy, and got the referee's stenographer.

"Oh, say, Miss Joline," she said, "will you give me the figures in Croissant, bankrupt?"

She got them and passed them on to her client.

"Your friend Croissant's assets," she explained, "are stated at \$201. His liabilities at \$180,000 odd. So there you are."

Helen rose. "So there's no hope then," she wearily replied. "Just what the others told me. No hope at all."

"Sit down!" urged Dorothy. Again she closed her eyes. "I'm trying to figure out," she said, "just what the game is—for Llewellyn Llandgraff always has his game; there must be a game."

Suddenly she rose, and darting around the corner of her desk, caught up Junior in her arms.

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Train," she apologized, "but I really just couldn't help doing that." She held out her hand, "I'm going to take your case, Mrs. Train," she announced, "and I'm going to tell you why. The law is nothing but a business of clutching at straws—clutching at straws, you understand? Well, I see a few, and I'm going to clutch at them. Hope? While there's

life, there's hope. Beside, I'm just aching for another game with Llewellyn Llandgraff. I'll take your case. Good-by."

"Gentlemen," said Llewellyn Llandgraff, from his end of the table in the referee's office, to the group of creditors and their attorneys scattered about the referee's big room, "you've got the figures, you've seen the schedule. Now, here's the bankrupt, ready to answer any and all questions—any and all, you understand."

"He's got to, whether he's ready or not," a gruff voice rumbled, and everybody laughed, even Duane Croissant, bankrupt.

Thereupon the creditors got down to business.

The bankrupt was sworn, and started to testify. His counsel was quite right; Croissant's financial career was an open book; he had never had any money of his own; he had borrowed from everybody in town, and he owed everybody in town. But Dorothy, in an obscure corner of the room, suddenly sat up and took notice at one question of the bankrupt's counsel.

"Mr. Croissant," Llandgraff had said, "this large creditor of yours is your father, Stephen J. Croissant. Is that right?"

"Yes," answered the bankrupt, in a voice that only to Dorothy seemed nervous.

"And who is he?"

The bankrupt nodded.

"Stephen J. Croissant, my father, is the tobacco man," was the answer.

"He is rich?"

"Yes," replied the bankrupt, "he is rich. He has practically supported me all my life. I owe him now this \$40,000 or \$50,000."

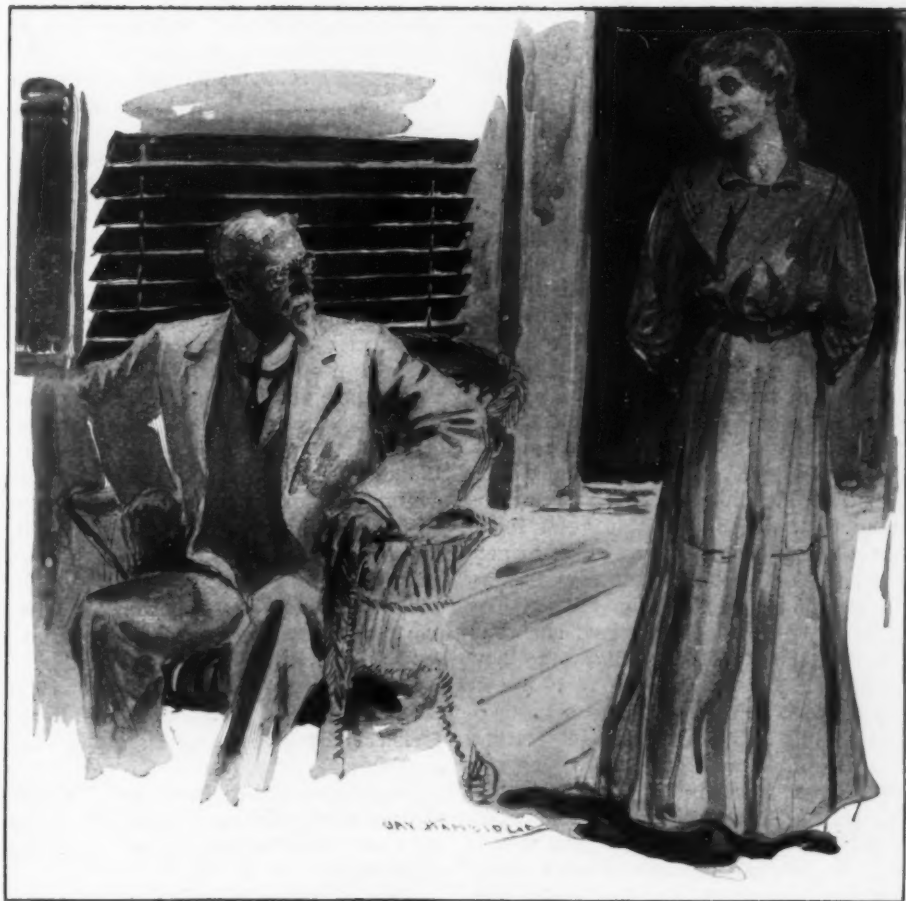
"Evidenced by these notes?" presented Llandgraff.

"Yes."

The gruff voice was raised again in protest. "Why don't your rich father pay us, then?" it inquired.

Another laugh ran around the room.

But Dorothy observed that Llandgraff took the pains to answer the query.



Stephen J. cast a startled glance at her

He faced the direction whence the voice had come.

"You understand, sir," he returned, "that Stephen J. Croissant is no more bound to pay his son's debts than I am, sir. Duane Croissant must stand on his own feet, sir. You understand that."

There was a murmur of assent; there always is. Creditors at a bankruptcy meeting are like sheep; they follow a leader, no matter who he is or where he may lead them. Little further interest was taken in the examination, for the very disparity of assets and liabilities was sufficient to frighten off the lawyers.

Still, Dorothy was not satisfied. Hastily scribbling a question on a piece of

paper, she nudged a clerk sitting next to her:

"Will you ask that question, please?"

The youth shook his head. Then he looked at Dorothy and his face flushed, for there was a plea in her eyes he could not deny.

"Mr. Referee," he said, "I'd like to ask a question, please."

"Whom do you represent?" queried the stenographer.

"John J. Carrick of Carrick's café," answered the youth glibly.

He tucked the bit of paper out of sight and went on:

"This bankrupt has no property and never has had any; he has very little or

no real business. Why, then, does he go through bankruptcy?"

There was a murmur of applause. To the lay mind there seemed force in the query. But Llandgraff brushed it aside.

"A fool question, Mr. Referee," he said, "and I object to it." But the crowd still murmured, and Llandgraff glanced at the bankrupt for an instant, then at the crowd.

"Oh, pshaw!" the lawyer sneered. "I'll answer that myself. This young man's father is willing to support this young man, but he is not willing to pay this young man's debts. If he gives this young man ten dollars to buy a pair of shoes, some of you creditors could swoop down on that ten, and he wouldn't get his shoes. Now, the old gentleman is not bound to give him a cent. You understand that, don't you? You can't force Mr. Croissant, Sr., rich as he is, to pay you a dollar—not a dollar. But he has the right to give money to his son, *for* his son. Well, he has renigged. He won't give the boy another dollar—the boy being by the way, a man of forty-five—not another dollar until Duane has got a clean bill of health. Duane is getting it in the only way he can, by wiping out his debts in bankruptcy. When he's discharged, he'll start fresh, and his father will start fresh. Now, you've got the reason. No one can prevent Duane's going through bankruptcy, and he's going, and there's an end to it. Any other questions? All right. Go on."

Dorothy touched the young law clerk on the arm.

"Thanks very much," she said.

She sat back, satisfied—satisfied, that is, with one thing. The rest of the crowd accepted Llandgraff's very clear explanation of the situation. But Dorothy did not, and she did not for one very good reason; because Llandgraff had made it.

"There must be some other explanation," she assured herself, "or he wouldn't have given this."

In half an hour the meeting started to break up.

"Adjourn for a week, Mr. Llandgraff?" suggested the referee. But the lawyer shook his head. So did Croissant, as Dorothy observed.

"Adjourn until to-morrow morning, if your Honor please," suggested Llandgraff.

The referee in bankruptcy raised his eyebrows. "Rather short adjournment, counselor," he said.

Llandgraff pressed forward eagerly—very eagerly. Dorothy could see that.

"Really, Mr. Referee," he insisted, "to-morrow morning, if it is possible. I—this thing is not paying me—and I respectfully insist—"

"To-morrow morning, ten o'clock," announced the referee, whereupon the little crowd dispersed, with Dorothy Dacres bringing up the rear.

There were two straws that she had clutched. The first was this: So far, Llandgraff had not stated the real reason why a dilettante with only an apparent business, and actually supported by his father, should wend his way through bankruptcy. The other was, that both Llandgraff and Croissant were in a tremendous hurry to get it all over with.

"I wonder why?" she asked herself.

"Is—is there any hope?" faltered Helen Train, a few days later. "Is there anything new?"

Dorothy stretched her arms. "New?" she answered, crisply. "Yes. I'm going on a two weeks' vacation, and I'm going right away."

"But—my case," faltered her client.

Dorothy nodded. "Your case," she said, "will take care of itself while I'm away. Nothing ever interferes with my vacation, and this isn't going to, you understand. Go home. I'll send for you when I want you. And if I don't want you, why don't come. That's all. Good-by."

Three days later she stood on the platform of a railway station two hundred miles away.

Beckoning to a hackman: "How far is it to Old Village?" she inquired.

"Two miles," he told her.

"Drive me out there," she directed.

He drove in silence for a full quarter of an hour; then he leaned back across the seat.

"Who was you-all agoin' to visit?" he inquired.

"Stephen J. Croissant, the tobacco man, lives out there?" she queried.

The driver blinked, as with some sudden shock. But otherwise he gave no sign. "Summer home's out there," he said.

"This is summer-time," she went on, "so he must be there now."

The man shook his head. "Just it," he commented. "It's his summer home—but he aint there. He left two days ago; gone with his son—Shore Beach, I think—"

Dorothy started. "Shore Beach!" she exclaimed. "Why, that's in Florida. They wouldn't go down there in summer time."

"That's where they've gone," he insisted. "Old man kind o' cold, I s'pose," he added, half to himself; "wanted to git warm. Shall I turn 'round and go back again?"

Dorothy shook her head. "No," she commanded, "we're almost there. Let me out. I'll walk the rest of the way."

She wanted to think. She knew she was on a wild-goose chase. She had made up her mind to see Stephen J. Croissant, the tobacco man, for just one purpose. The plight of Helen Train and her chubby little Junior, possessed Dorothy body and soul. She wanted to appeal to Stephen J. Croissant, as a father, to settle up this claim against his son. At the tobacco man's New York office she had been informed that Stephen J., a bit indisposed, had gone to his summer home for a month's rest. And here she was—and no Stephen J. Croissant.

She sauntered up the gravel path leading to the veranda. The house was closed; there was no doubt about that. She pressed a button, and an old caretaker appeared.

"All gone on a trip," she said, "a great long trip. Can't tell when they'll be back. All gone."

"To Shore Beach, Florida?" calmly suggested Dorothy.

The caretaker was seized with a spasm of shivering. "How'd you know?" she gasped. "How'd you know? D'y'e live here in town? How'd you come to know?"

In the road again Dorothy paused. A

strong wind was blowing, the day was bright, the air charged with ozone. In her blood was the free air of the hills, the witchery of the countryside was upon her.

"Oh, for a walk," she sighed, "a good long, country walk. After all, this is my vacation. I mustn't forget that."

So she walked, but not very far. A quarter-of-a-mile down the road she found a boy, a five-year-old, sitting on a fence—bare footed, with a stick in his hand, dreaming the dreams of a five-year-old.

"Hello!" said Dorothy, for she could no more resist the charm of a five-year-old than she could resist breathing in the air about her.

"Hello!" he answered.

"How are tricks?" asked Dorothy.

He told her how tricks were. He told her many things. Dorothy listened while he prattled on.

"Say," he said at length, looking fearfully up the road and then down the road, "did you ever see a hole in the ground?"

Dorothy thought about it for awhile. "I don't believe I ever did," she finally confessed.

He slid down from the fence at that and beckoned to her.

"I'm scared to go alone, but I'll take you there," he said.

With his hand in hers he led the way along a dense woodland path. Then, at one spot where the undergrowth was unusually thick, he dragged her through a ragged opening that some one had made. For half a moment more they sped on in silence. Then, clutching her tightly, he peered with her down into a small ravine.

Dorothy started.

"There's the hole," he said.

There was a hole, sure enough, and made recently by human hands. The fresh earth was piled up all around its sides.

"Who made the hole?" she queried.

"Men," he whispered. "'N they buried treasure there—in a box, at night. They buried treasure there 'n they took it up again. Yes'm. That's what they did."

"How do you know?" asked Dorothy.

The boy pulled her down to him and put his mouth close to her ear.

"Bill Cantwell saw 'em do it," he explained, "Bill saw 'em do it. And he didn't tell nobody but me. So there."

That very evening Dorothy was on her way to Shore Beach, Florida. She didn't know why—that is, not *exactly*.

"Clutching at straws," she confessed to herself with a smile that was a bit weary.

It was hot at Shore Beach—terrifically hot. And she didn't see a soul she knew.

The Clerk laughed when she interviewed him.

"Northerners?" he said. "Well I guess not, except these two."

He placed his finger on the register and she read their names—the Croissants. So they were here. And late that afternoon she saw them, father and son. They both looked at her, and both passed on into the hotel.

Almost immediately the son, Duane Croissant, came out. He strolled past her as she sat alone at one end of the veranda, and Dorothy noted, gladly that he did not recognize her. There was no reason why he should. The Northern town in which they lived was a big, overgrown place—a city, in fact, and their paths had never crossed. Moreover she had registered for her own reasons under an assumed name and from New York.

But she glowed with excitement as she noted that Duane Croissant was unquestionably bent upon a flirtation. And she encouraged him—encouraged him just enough to get an introduction to his father early in the evening. It was early next morning, before Duane the son was out of bed, that she had her first opportunity to talk to Stephen J. alone.

"You have not been well, Mr. Croissant," she ventured.

Stephen J. cast a startled glance at her. "How'd you know?" he asked.

Dorothy shrugged her shoulders. "One would hardly come to Florida from New York, in weather like this, just for fun," she explained. "I suppose it's for your health."

"Right," he answered, "for my health."

Dorothy wondered just what particular malady this roasting atmosphere was likely to cure, but she plunged into her subject. In fact, she came boldly to the front. She put the case first, casually, then by way of analogy, and after he had agreed with her at every stage, she pressed it home.

"This man who robbed this woman is your son, Mr. Croissant," she said at length, "and I'm her friend. What can you do for her?"

Immediately Stephen J. Croissant flew into a panic—not into a passion.

"Oh, dear," he cried, "you can't expect me to do anything. How can I do anything? Why, I have troubles of my own. No, no. Not another word."

He fell suddenly to shivering.

"You can't talk to me about it—not to me. Talk to Duane."

Without another word he half-staggered, half-ran, into the house, whereupon Dorothy, whose suit-case was already packed, drove down to the station, and took the first train for New York. She did not want to be questioned by Duane.

"No thoroughfare," she murmured to herself. "I'll go back to Old Village and see Bill Cantwell, who saw the box of treasure. I must keep on, clutching at straws—clutching at straws."

It was months later that her client, Helen Train, rushed into her office one day in great excitement.

"Listen!" cried her client. "What do you think has happened? Stephen Croissant is dead."

Dorothy cast a glance of startled inquiry at Mrs. Train.

"Stephen Croissant?" she queried. "The bankrupt's father?"

Her client pointed to the notice in the *Morning Mail*.

"At Pasadena, California, a week ago," she said.

Dorothy took the *Mail* and read.

"Near Pasadena, California," she corrected. Then she leaned back in her chair. "Well?" she queried.

Helen Train's eyes sparkled.

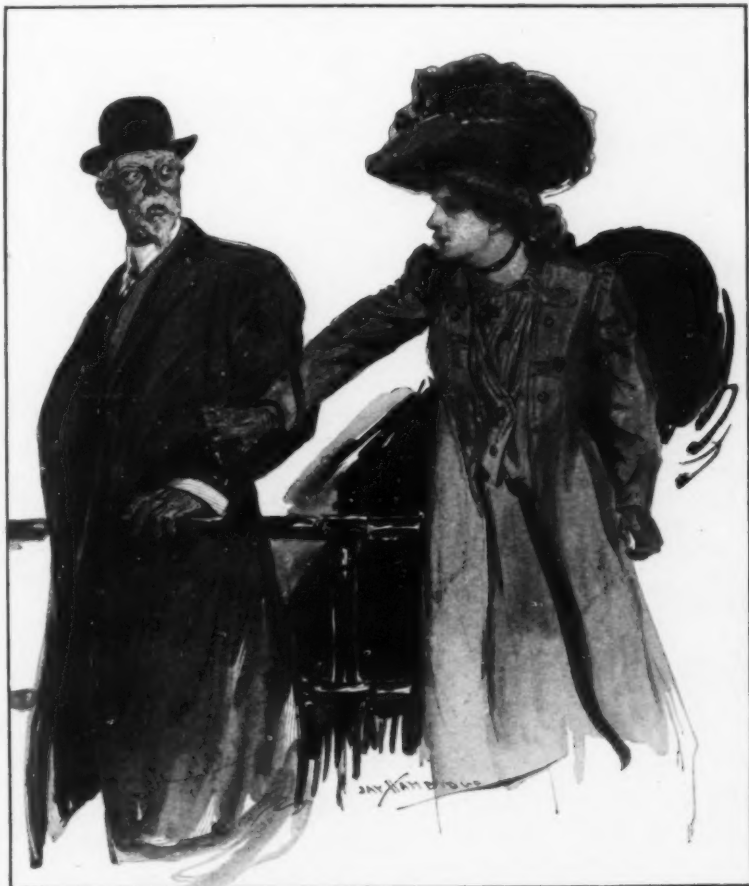
"Why—Duane will get all his father's money, don't you see?"

"Yes—I don't see," answered Dorothy. "And I can't see—not until I've seen somebody else."

She got the referee in bankruptcy on the wire, and made a brief query.

"Croissant?" answered the referee. "Oh, discharged—trustee discharged—all over. Case closed. Good-by."

No, wait a bit," she cried, as her client started to leave the room, "don't go yet. There's one thing I haven't told you and that is this: I've been waiting for months and months for that old man to die. Never despair. Just clutch at straws and hope. That's the law. I'm going up to see Duane as soon as he comes back."



"You know well that Stephen J. did not die a month ago," she challenged

Dorothy smiled—a cold hard smile it seemed to her young client.

"You perceive, Mrs. Train," she said, "that this man Duane Croissant is discharged of all his debts; it's all over. Your claim is wiped out. That's all."

"But—his father's money," faltered her client.

"His father's money is his to enjoy as he will," said Dorothy, "that's all.

Duane, however, didn't come back, at least not to Dorothy's home town. But he did come to New York, and inside of a month. And it was then that Dorothy stole over one evening and rang the door bell of his town house. Or, no, she didn't ring the bell—she hadn't time. For before she could place her hand upon it, the door opened, and a man stepped forth and brushed past her.

Dorothy didn't ring the bell. She didn't go in. Instead, she turned and followed the man who had come clattering down the steps, followed him to the subway entrance.

Then she placed a hand upon his arm. He was an elderly man, with a gray beard.

"Mr. Croissant," she said, clutching him tightly.

"That's my name," said the old man.

"Mr. Stephen J. Croissant," she went on confidently.

"No," he answered in a panic, "not Stephen J. Croissant. Stephen J. Croissant is dead."

"Duane's father," she went on mercilessly, "is he dead? When did he die?"

There was an insistence in her tone that would not be denied. The old man shivered as he felt the significance of the question.

"A—a month or so ago, in California," he replied.

Her grip—her athletic grip, tightened upon his arm. She felt that she could have held him against all the world just then.

She looked into his eyes. "You know well that Stephen J. Croissant did not die in California a month ago," she challenged.

He leaned weakly against a railing. "Who—who are you?" he asked. Then he drew away. "You—you're the girl of Shore Beach," he said, "the—the girl who—"

"I am the girl who—guessed," she said, "who—clutched at straws. Why don't you call for the police?"

"I—I don't know what to do," the old man confessed. "What do you want of me?"

"I'll show you," she returned, dragging him down the subway steps. "And, remember, any time you want to call in the police, why just call, Mr. Croissant. You are Mr. Croissant, aren't you?"

"Croissant is my name," he admitted weakly.

She took him down to a railroad terminal, and got Chandler Lefferts on the long distance.

"I need help, Chan," she announced. "Can you come down to New York? It

won't take you more than an hour."

"Sure!" answered Chan. "You hold the fort. I'll come."

He came.

"What am I to do?" he asked.

She nodded to the old man who sat beside her, his hat pulled down over his eyes.

"This is Mr. Croissant, Mr. Lefferts," she said, "I want you to take him back home and keep him until I come. If he gets unruly, call in the police and charge him with—"

She put her lips close to Lefferts' ear and what she whispered the captive could not hear.

"But—I won't call in the police," promised the old man. "You can bet your boots on that."

"I'm going," announced Dorothy, "back to call on Duane Croissant, Bankrupt."

"What do you want?" asked Duane Croissant of her, half an hour later, in his house.

"Fifteen thousand dollars and compound interest, for Helen Train," she answered, "and I want it right away. You've got lots of money—"

"Not lots," he returned, "not more than a couple of hundred thousand when it's all cleaned up—my father wasn't so rich. And anyway, I've been discharged in bankruptcy. I've got a clean bill of health."

Dorothy leaned forward. "A clean bill of health," she murmured, "you might have had, if it hadn't been for Henry Croissant—if it hadn't been for him."

Duane turned white as a ghost. "Henry Croissant," he gasped, "do you know him?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "Met him—and you—at Shore Beach, last year, my friend," she said.

He looked at her closely. "By George," he said, "so you did."

Then he stopped. He shook suddenly from head to foot.

"What were you doing there?" he demanded fiercely.

Dorothy smiled. "Clutching at straws," she said, "that's all. And I was doing that to-day when I met your Uncle



"Henry Croissant!" he gasped, "do you know him?"

Henry coming down the steps—your Uncle Henry who ought to have stayed in Denver where he belongs rather than bothering you for more money all the time. Clutching at straws," she went on, tantalizingly. "I was doing that down at Old Village—Bill Cantwell helped me do it, too." She tapped her knuckles on the desk. "I saw the hole in the ground," she said suddenly.

"You did?" he exclaimed, hoarsely. "Go on. What else do you think you know?"

She settled herself in her chair, as if for a comfortable chat.

"I'll go as far back as Llewellyn Llandgraff," she began. "I knew, when you employed him to put you through bankruptcy, there was something in the wind. That was your first mistake. But I didn't know, and the rest of your creditors didn't know, that Stephen J. Croissant, your father, was then ill of a malady that in time would carry him to his grave. I know now that you understood you must be discharged in bankruptcy before he died—otherwise you, his only heir, would get—what? His estate, after your creditors had finished with it.

"I clutched at straws and I guessed. You were in a great hurry to get it through before he died, and you might have succeeded had it not been for one unforeseen occurrence—he died a month too soon. From that hour, friend Croissant, you had to hide the fact of his death. You bought the silence of a few countryfolk with a few dollars, and hid your father temporarily in a hole in the ground. Things like that are easy in Old Village, with a little money. There are ways of doing things. You—and Llewellyn Llandgraff understand those ways. And then, your Uncle Henry, a bit yellow he is, too, came on because he knew his brother was sick—and you debauched your Uncle Henry with some of the Croissant coin. And Uncle Henry permitted it—there was some family resemblance between the two, you took a chance—you and he summered and wintered in out-of-the-way places. Then, when you were discharged, you announced your father's death. Simple, yes, but a fatal scheme."

She tapped the desk again.

"Your father's money belongs, not to you, but to your trustees in bankruptcy to be distributed among your creditors. And I'm the only one who knows it. Understand?" She clicked her teeth. "And I want—blood," she declared.

"What do you really want?" he demanded. "If it's blackmail, I suppose I'd better—"

The girl shook her head. "I want \$15,000 with compound interest, for my client—clean. And beside, I want you to pay to me, the counsel fee that I might charge her. You got her into her adversity. You've got to lift her out."

"Figure it up," he said, "and tell me how much it amounts to."

She told him.

"Now, look here, Miss What's-y'r-name," he said, "you don't get a dollar of this—not a dollar of it, understand, except on one condition: that this is the only claim you represent, that you won't take up any other claims against me, and that you, personally, will keep your mouth shut about this thing. Do you agree?"

Dorothy Dacres thought for a moment.

"Can I have the money now?"

"I can get it for you in three-quarters of an hour," he assured her.

"I accept your terms," she agreed.

"Chan," said Dorothy, late that night, "I hate a thief. I've got my money all right. And I'm under a solemn promise not to tell what I know. But—I hate a thief. And I hate Duane Croissant—"

"Same here," muttered the young man.

"And I hate Llewellyn Llandgraff," continued the girl. "I'm going to keep my promise. But, say, Chan," she whispered, "I don't see anything to prevent your getting useful information out of old man Croissant on condition that he goes scot free—and then using it as you see fit. Just try it on, Chan, try it on."

Chan tried it on. A week later he represented all the creditors in town.

"Gee whiz," he remarked some three months afterward to Miss Dacres, "the law is the biggest game of all."

"It is when you're looking for big game," she agreed.

B Secondary Surrenders to Spring

BY WALTER JONES

ILLUSTRATED BY B. CORY KILVERT

THE B Secondary is restless. It always is restless along about the first of May. By this time it has forgotten how near it came to not being a B Secondary at all and is looking forward with riotous impatience to becoming a C Grammar. The second term tests are well past and it doesn't have to be hearing eternally, "Twenty pages in review to-morrow, children," or "Aren't you taking any books home to-night, Leila?" The ink-wells are full of violets and fish-hooks get mixed up with the slate pencils. When Elly Ringgold screams, Teacher says automatically, "Edward, throw that angleworm out of the window, stand in the corner and count a thousand."

Teacher also is restless. She is beginning to wonder whether she would get more inspiration out of a new summer silk or the meeting of the State Association. The private drawer of her desk is full of time-tables, and she declaims loudly to Principal about the delights of the Lake trip—Hmph! As if the weeniest pupil didn't know she is going down to normal summer term to complete her course in pedagogy!

And at this particular season—for no reason which the pedagogies adequately explain—youthful fancies turn to thoughts of love; chronicles of affection are intercepted in the hollows of lead pencil erasers; and trips to the water-cooler, leading by the favored one's desk, are popular. Young ladies vaunt penny-



"Hand the note to me"

bags; young gentlemen proffer surreptitious all-day-suckers: symptoms which Teacher recognizes as attendant upon a "case." But Teacher is wise and bides her time. She knows that affection is a menace to discipline; also, that the best way to kill it is to catch it red-handed and make it ridiculous.

When Leila Pilcer has consulted the dictionary for the third time between half past one and two o'clock, Teacher concludes it is time to take measures.

"Leila," she says pleasantly, "it seems necessary for you to use the dictionary so frequently this afternoon that I am afraid you are disturbing the other children. You may bring it here to my desk where you wont have to pass through the aisles."

"Please, Miss Naggle," responds Leila glibly, "but I don't need to. I can get through my composition all right, soon as I find if there's a 'c' in scissors."

"There is a 'c,' Leila; but you may bring the dictionary just the same."

A sudden, anticipatory silence falls over the B Secondary. Leila picks up the heavy book and starts down the aisle. As she passes Edward Ittner's desk, his lips frame the quick words, "Drop it, kid," his feet shoot swiftly out, and Leila and the dictionary go sprawling. It seems a Machiavellian maneuver.

Teacher's gray eyes grow a little grayer, her smile becomes a trifle more fixed. Leila picks up the dictionary and



"Edward, those are such jingly verses"

brings it to Miss Naggle's desk. Teacher never so much as glances at it.

"Edward," she says calmly, "you may bring me the note that was in the dictionary."

Edward glowers. "I hain't got—" he begins.

"I shall give you just two minutes to hand that note to me."

Teacher's level gaze is merciless. Edward looks at the clock, shuffles his feet, rises, is suddenly seized with a violent fit of coughing. His hand shoots to his mouth—just as Teacher grasps him by the nape of the neck. She leads him forth to the cloakroom, his eye-sockets bulging.

After what seems to Leila an interminable period, Miss Naggle ushers in Edward, who holds in his hand a chewed and rumpled piece of paper.

"Read that note," she commands; "read it to the school."

"Sha'n't do it," Edward mutters.

"Roll up your sleeve."

The room is so still you can hear a pin drop; Leila's head is buried in her hands. The ruler falls in even strokes until Edward's white palm glows with a ruddy pink. A film gathers over his dogged eyes that dare Teacher to dissolve in tears. At the twelfth stroke she stops.

"Will you read it now?" she repeats.

"No."

"Then I shall have to read it myself."

She takes the crumpled paper and smooths it out. The school looks derisively at Leila. Suddenly Teacher bites her lip, almost till the blood comes. Edward's eyes meet her angry ones with the hint of a twinkle. She hesitates, but she is "up against it," she has to read:

Edward, what have you got left over from your lunch to-day?

LEILA.

And below, Edward's answer:

Polly-wolly-wunkin,
Polly-wolly-wy,
Polly-wolly-wunkin,
Punkin Pie!

Want some?

EDWARD.

For a moment this gem staggers the poetic susceptibilities of the B Secondary. Then, "Ain't Edward soft?" audibly whispers Arline Anglestadt, whom Leila has supplanted in the culprit's affections. But the titter that runs over the room isn't for Edward: it's for Teacher. Smarty! She got left. It wasn't a "mash" note after all.

But you can't get anything on Teacher. Her smile only broadens.

"Edward," she says, "those are such pretty, jingly verses. After dismissal you shall copy them twenty times in your best hand. The school will return to its work."

But the school doesn't want to return to its work. It has been pleasantly titillated and refuses to subside into spelling and division. And it won't have to for long, because someone is coming in—pretty soon, if anything can be inferred from the constancy with which Miss

Naggle interrogates the clock. Who is it? Why, Practice Teacher, of course. Doesn't normal school adjourn every Wednesday at noon to give its neophytes opportunity to put their theory into practice? Joy permeates the ranks of the B Secondary.

Practice Teacher is lots of fun.

This one comes in for an hour at half past two. She calls it her hour in purgatory and confides to her bosom friend that she'd marry a greengrocer sight unseen; but as she has paid her full tuition and all the accessible greengrocers are already engaged, her mental attitude is beside the question. She is tall and thin and has red hair. As she has been in before, Miss Naggle can improve the occasion to mail a letter to her sister telling about the "crush she has on" with the assistant superintendent.

"Absent just a minute, my dear, on business to another room," says Teacher sweetly, and leaves the Titian-headed to her fate.

Immediately paper wads and note writing become epidemic. A reading class is in progress. Practice Teacher calls upon Elly Ringgold, who makes a perfect recitation.

"Very good," says the tyro, "but tell me, little Miss Ringgold, what is a 'savage' that the lesson speaks about?"

Little Miss Ringgold doesn't know; but she volunteers the information that she always gets ninety-eight in reading. Perhaps Leila Pilcer can tell us.

"He's a wild man," explains Leila superiorly; "but Miss Naggle never asks us definitions till it's review." O laws, O precepts! Rote reading in the fifth year! What a vio-

lation of all pedagogical principles! Practice Teacher is deeply shocked.

Meanwhile the boys have become noisy. She thinks to interest them by calling upon several of their number to tell the lesson's story in their own words. According to "the course," it will coordinate their imitative and reproductive faculties. But unfortunately she lights upon one Richard Woldansky whose chief faculty is profanity.

"Little boy," she begins encouragingly—why will Practice Teacher always say *little boy*?—"I mean that curly-headed little boy in the corner—will you sum up the page we have just been reading in your own words?"

"Sum up?" repeats the curly-headed drowsily. "I don't see no figyures. W'at t'ell's youse mean?"

Practice Teacher's face immediately becomes as red as her hair. Looking upon the iniquitous child, she wonders why the floor doesn't open up and swallow him. Her mind reverts rapidly to the curriculum. The punishment for this heinous offence is prescribed somewhere in her text; she remembers finding it in the index one time when she was looking up "Pay Day." But before she can recall distinctly, Leila comes to her rescue.



"I don't see no figyures. W'at t'ell's youse mean?"

"Please," she says, "you mustn't mind him; he was born cussin'. You must say, 'Richard, how many times have I told you not to swear before the children?' and he'll answer—anyway, this time he will—'Beg y'r par'n, w'a's it mean?'"

"But," asks Practice Teacher, puzzled, "why does Miss Naggle permit him to swear at all and why can't he understand what I say?"

"Don't you know?"—Leila's unconscious patronage is delightful—"don't you know he jus' comes in here 'n' sets? He aint never called on. He's a case of re—regarded development."

"Why is he here if he—"

"'Cause his paw is boss of this ward. What he says goes. If his paw wanted him to, Richy could be in the high school, he could."

Leila is a competent instructor. Surely Practice Teacher is learning much that is not taught in normal schools. But while this profitable dialogue has been taking place, the school has become so loud in misdemeanor that even a Practice Teacher at her wits' end realizes something must be done.

"Children," she says, laying her eyeglasses carefully on the desk, "children, how many of you would like to perform a few relaxation exercises?"

The B Secondary acclaims the idea

with an area of waving hands, albeit the nomenclature is new.

"Please," inquires Edward Ittner, "is it that heel-toe-heel-toe-'n'-turn-round-'thout-bumpin'-your-neighbor?"

"Oh, no," assures Practice Teacher, smiling at Miss Naggle's lack of progressiveness, "not at all. Now all rise. Watch me, and I'm sure you will find it very interesting and easy."

Strictly according to calisthenic Hoyle, she stands on her right foot, extends her left to the rear, raises her right hand towards the ventilator, and lowers her left almost to the hole in her stocking just above the ankle.

"Little Eva!" chuckles Clasper Margry, who frequents the home of melodrama.

"Aint them skinny arms?" confides Lena Derwetter to Leila. "An' freckled, too. She'd orta git Swiss Mountain Dew."

But with the exception of these scattered critics, the class experiments animatedly with the new pose.

"Now we'll try another one," hastens Practice Teacher, after Edward has overturned a flower-pot from Miss Naggle's William Morris arts-crafts shelf.

This time she bends forward, hands in front of her as if diving, touches the tips of her fingers to the floor and straightens slowly, knees rigid. (It's a good one and to watch the stout and venerable head of the normal school demonstrate it is quite worth the price of tuition.)

"Splash! Who fell in?" exclaims an unlocatable voice, and the B Secondary is off on a riot of contortion.

Only stout and stupid Rachel Wogelstein is left behind. "I cyan't do id, Teacher," she deplores; "id makes id wit' me in the stomach an ache."

Practice Teacher does not realize how much noise B Secondary is making; but Miss Judy, A Primary, underneath, does and sends up word to "have that disturbance stopped instanter." Practice Teacher is frightened out of a year's growth and com-



"You will find it very easy"

mands instant cessation of the exercises. As the school leisurely obeys, Miss Naggle steps through the door and takes control of the situation:

"Edward, into your seat at once. Jeannette, turn around. Leila Pilcer, tie your hair ribbon and keep it tied."

Then, smiling savagely, she turns to Practice Teacher.

"My dear young lady," she says, "I can't have my room made into a perfect Bedlam. I was detained longer than I expected. Your time is up for this afternoon."

The last period of the session is grammar period and is, on Wednesdays, devoted to the diagramming of sentences at the board; but, as wall space is limited and Miss Naggle doesn't believe in sentence analysis for the Secondaries anyway, it is her custom to distribute chalk to a few of the brightest pupils and decree study hour for the rest.

Here is Leila's opportunity. All the afternoon her hero-worshipping soul has yearned toward Edward Ittner. For her sake has he not undergone chastisement of his person? May it not be whispered about the playground that Leila Pilcer has a "feller" on the Highland Avenue Sluggers? And aren't the Sluggers this very day to cross bats with the West End Beef Eaters? Verily they are, and Edward must "beat it" with "the bunch" on the first available street-car after school. For twelve whole hours or more she will not be able to impart to him the assurance that she returns his affection. In the meantime, Arline Anglestadt, who lives in the same court with Edward, may do her hair in a coronet braid, daub her face in some of her show-girl sister's powder and win back her affinity. The situation is acute.

But Leila can always compose poetry under stress. She is also something of a



Little Miss Ringgold doesn't know

tactician. Tearing a piece of non-committal paper from her penny-bag, she writes diligently four lines of a verse in an elaborate backhand which may fall into Teacher's clutches without betraying its writer. This, *billet doux* she folds multitudinously and inserts into the neat hollow of a sponge extracted from the recesses of her desk.

Neither Leila nor Edward is in the section at the board. Teacher, with her back to the room, is inspecting Jeannette's sentence.

"How many times must I tell you," she repeats wearily, "always to put the object complement on the line below? Like this."

With a sweep of her eraser she blots out Jeannette's diagram and begins a correction when suddenly, wheeling around, she hurls out, "Who threw that sponge?"

Through the glass in the cloakroom door she has seen the sponge, but haply

only in transit. While she advances to the center of the room, Edward kicks it into the aisle. Miss Naggle picks it up and holds it tentatively over the waste chute.

"Who threw this?" she asks again. No one threw it. "Very well, if I can't find an owner, I'll have to drop it down here."

Now a good sponge, like the one Miss Naggle holds in her hand, costs five pennies, or ten of Trucker's coffee map-cards, or a "stamp from Heligoland that hain't been canceled, honest Injun." It seems as if almost anyone would willingly claim the sponge and stay in after school, thinks Teacher.

Ah, here is the answer! She draws forth a fancifully striped wad of penny-bag and presents it to the awed inspection of the school.

"Children," she says—and for the nonce her smile has gone into eclipse—"this is a very serious matter. Not since I have taught in Highland Avenue have I intercepted two notes in one afternoon."

The B Secondary looks grave. The last time the smile went into eclipse two scholars were suspended. Miss Naggle's glance ferrets through the forms: Arline, Rachel,—it surely came from the girls' side—Elly, Leila. Of all the pupils, Leila alone remains absorbed in her work.

"Leila," says Teacher, "let me see your sponge."

"What m'm?" Looking up abstractedly, Leila wipes a crayon stain from her fingers.

"Where is your sponge? Let me see it."

Leila extends a perfectly good sponge.

"You seem very busy, Leila."

"Yes, m'm. I'm finishing my map of South Americuh."

"Very well, Leila," the smile returns, a little baffled but still almost up to its usual standard of serviceability, "you may continue. Remember this time not to paint Brazil or your colors wont go around."

Leila bends over her map. As yet she dare scarcely breathe. Teacher may be watching her.

"I don't wonder," observes Miss Naggle, "that no one would own this sponge. The note in it would bring a blush to the cheeks of any nice little girl. I consider it my duty to read it." And she reads:

I love coffee,
I love tea;
I love you,
If you love me.

In the premonitory hush that follows the revelation of this immodest declaration, Teacher takes account of complexions. The eternal feminine is red with shame at the depravity of her sex; the eternal masculine crimson with suppressed mirth.

"Oh, slush!" ventures a detached voice, and the room breaks into a sea of giggles.

Leila glances fearfully toward Edward Ittner. He makes a pretense of sharing the general merriment, but suddenly ducks behind his geography and shoots her a wink from the tail of his eye. It is, then, that he understands—and reciprocates. The heart under Miss Pilcer's pinafore races like a trip-hammer. Her muse has triumphed. Teacher is fooled. The school is fooled. Love reigns supreme.

"Silence." It is the clangor of Miss Naggle's voice backed by the clangor of Miss Naggle's bell. "Dismissal time, children—though I should detain the entire school as a punishment for the execrable deportment of the afternoon. Keep the lines straight as you file out. Edward Ittner will remain."

As Teacher superintends formation in the cloakrooms, the delinquent inserts a bit of paper into the dallying fist of Leila Pilcer. Once safe in the playground she unfolds it ardently, only to confront the unintelligible, printed initials:

B. B. D. C. Y. K.

Back in the B Secondary, whither travel Leila's thoughts, are Miss Naggle and Edward. Teacher retires to her private closet to insert a couple of Baby Belle puffs into her coiffure. After teachers' meeting she is invited out to dinner. Not that she wouldn't like to wear the

puffs in school hours; but—the pupils would be sure to wonder “where did she git them sausages.” She leaves the door ajar and keeps an eye upon Edward.

The boy has one eye on his paper and the other on the clock. He knows that if he isn't out by four-thirty, he will not be in time to “get in the game” against the Beef Eaters. Teacher knows it, too, and is consoled for his stubbornness about the note.

“Please, Miss Naggle, I'm all through.”

She loiters, washing her hands; then she emerges and looks at his copy disconsolately.

“I said your best hand, Edward. This wont do at all. You may write them over.”

He shuffles his feet and his pen scrapes sullenly. Teacher doesn't notice; she is absorbed in making up her register. The clock creeps on to four-forty. It is almost time for teachers' meeting. Teacher snaps her register shut.

“That will do, Edward,” she says.

Without handing her the written sheets, he rushes for the door. One stare up and down the street convinces him that “the bunch” hasn't waited. In the extremity of his disappointment, he gives vent to a sufficiently emphatic ejaculation.

“W'y, Eddie Ittner,” issues a feminine voice from behind the school-house-door, “quit your swearin'.”

“Aw, g'wan,” he swaggers; then shamefacedly, “I didn't mean nawthin'. H'lo, Leila, what you doin' 'round here?”

“Waitin' for Elly,” fibs this true

daughter of Eve, “but I guess she aint comin'. Say, I think Teacher's awful dirty, horrid mean. I'd like to smack her face, the way she's pickin' on you. Lemme see your hands.”

“Nix. It aint nawthin'.”

“It is so. It's all red.”

“Naw, I tell yuh it aint nawthin'—fur a man. Lookit here, Leila, did yuh mean that, honest, did yuh?”

“What?”

“Aw, yuh know all right. Quit your kiddin'. Le's go down to Wessinger's 'n' git a sundae.”

Leila accepts with alacrity. A sundae at Wessinger's is equivalent to the public announcement of a troth. On the way she swings her books with an elaborate assumption of indifference.

“What's that mean, what you wrote?” she persists.

“I gotta whisper it,” Edward replies with an uneasy giggle; then he leans towards Leila's pink ear. “Bye-bye-dawling-consider - yourself - kissed — that's what it means, dummy.”

Meanwhile back in her classroom Teacher is throwing into the waste chute innumerable scraps of “Polly - wolly-wunkin, Polly-wolly-wy.” Her mind is a rendezvous for divers inchoate thoughts, not all of which are unpleasant.

“Drat the little rascals,” she ruminates, “they begin the game early . . . Heigh-ho-hum. Now I'm in for a half hour of Miller's pedagogical pills and platitudes . . . I wonder if — Mrs. Cleavinger didn't say—but it's to be quite a large dinner—and she *did* ask the former assistant superintendent once.”



“I gotta whisper it,” Edward replies

Of Little Faith

BY WILLIAM MAC LEOD RAINE

MASON, joined in battle with a white tie, gave answer only by a throaty rumble. His wife craned round her head to discover how her skirt hung before repeating her question.

"Why don't you want to go, James?"

He chuckled grimly. "That's the secret. I'm on the inside—poor Hilary and I."

"Why, 'poor' Hilary, of all men? Isn't he a rising lawyer with a good income and a beautiful young wife? I can't see that he needs your pity."

Mason gave the finishing touches to his tie.

"The art of imparting gossip so as to stimulate the appetite is a fine one, my dear. Blame my taste for the artistic as the reason why I did not begin by telling you outright that Hilary will be a dead man inside of three months."

His wife stared. "What's the matter with him? Does he know?"

"Yes, he does. Latimer examined him on an application for a policy in our company and found him a bad risk—all shot to pieces and ready to collapse."

"Did Doctor Latimer tell him?"

"Hilary is not the man to be fubbed off with palaver. He got at the facts right there and made Latimer promise to keep it quiet. It's a secret, my dear. That's why I'm telling you."

He denied himself the smile that might have accompanied this.

"And Mrs. Hilary is giving a card party to-night."

She came to this new phase of the situation in a shocked voice.

"From which one may deduce that Mrs. Hilary doesn't know."

"What nonsense! Of course she knows. Why shouldn't she know?"

"I suppose because Hilary has not seen fit to tell her. He probably has his reasons."

"His reasons? Oh, you men! Isn't it

her sacred right to know, her wifely privilege to help him bear the burden to the end?"

Mrs. Mason was not the president of the West Side Woman's Club for nothing.

"I daresay it is, my dear. But Hilary is a mere man. He may have reasoned that it was better to spare her."

"Well, I think it is a great piece of folly," Mrs. Mason announced definitively.

"Of course it is," agreed her husband. He did not add, though he might have, that it was a kind of folly that touched him nearly.

If her husband's revelation had prepared Mrs. Mason for dramatics at the Hilary's she was disappointed. Kate Hilary was no less the perfect hostess than usual, a serene and tactful general of the social forces at her command. Never had her fine, pliant personality carried a more sure distinction of grace.

As for Hilary, whom Mrs. Mason's hawk-eye brought down in a far corner, he was merely his unobtrusive self, a quiet, reserved gentleman, not given to wearing his heart on his sleeve. He was talking with some earlier arrivals, a little group of men bunched together in a corner, and when she sailed in on them, Mrs. Mason discovered the topic to be no more depressing than the latest presidential message. She found it hard to believe her host a very ill man, even with the corroborating evidence of the polished pallor of his complexion. He was never one of many words, but she could not say that she found him quieter than usual. Once indeed, when the shifting card players left him for a moment by himself, some mood of detachment had its way with him. He was looking at his wife, who was sparkling in gay badinage with one of the guests, and the mask fell. His eyes were hungry for love, full of

the loneliness that covets, but will not ask sympathy. In a moment he was his impassive self again, but not before Mrs. Mason had seen enough to guess at the truth.

That her missionary conscience would begin to stir uneasily was to be expected of Mrs. Mason. Without being quite sure what her duty was in the matter, she knew she had one. To her husband she hinted as much a day or two later.

He scoffed genially, suggesting that she go to Mrs. Hilary for advice.

"Would you, James? Would you go to her?" she asked eagerly. There were moments when even Mrs. Mason was not omniscient.

He laughed. "No, you don't, my dear. It's not my conscience that is working overtime. You must decide for yourself."

When Mrs. Mason was shown into the library by the servant, she had not yet made up her mind what she would say. For one usually so self-possessed, she detected in herself an unwonted apprehension.

Mrs. Hilary would have been more surprised at the avenue into which her caller led the conversation if she had known her less well. But undebatable platitudes and truisms for moral lessons were to be expected of Mrs. Mason. Still, there was about her to-day a solicitude, a you-poor-stricken-darling-air that Mrs. Hilary could not fail to detect.

When her visitor dropped something indistinct about cherishing our dear ones while we still have them with us, Kate Hilary pointed a direct question.

"Mrs. Mason, is it Mr. Hilary you mean? Do you know anything that I ought to know? Is he ill?"

"Oh, my dear! You must prepare yourself—"

If Mrs. Hilary felt emotion, it did not reach her manner. She listened, slender and rigid, looking straight out of the window, the side of her face nearest her visitor, hidden by the hand in which it rested.

"Thank you," she said at last, in a voice dry and arid.

Her visitor left, under the impression that Kate Hilary was a hard, unlovable woman.

After ushering out her caller, Mrs. Hilary returned to the library. She stood by one of the windows in the gathering dusk and stared out without seeing anything. She was alone with her conscience in the twilight, living over again the unfruitful years of her married life. There had been but two of them, and on the whole they had not been complete failures. If she and her husband, Robert Hilary, had lived their inner lives apart, outwardly they were in perfect accord—tactful, courteous, considerate always. If they had not known each other as lovers, they had never been less than friends. That he was proud of the fine dignity with which she had ruled his house, Kate was sure. She had given freely all he had asked. If he had wanted more, why had he not demanded it? Surely he would have done so.

When she heard him come up the steps, she went to the front door to meet him. The little light of surprise in his eyes was a poignant reproach to her. She could not remember when she had gone to meet him before. She had not supposed he cared.

He looked to her pitifully worn and thin. The weary droop of his shoulders as she helped him out of his ulster, touched her nearly. Silently she hung the overcoat in its place. She could not have spoken without breaking down.

"A hard day at the office," he explained, in casual explanation of his weariness, but he was moved by her solicitude, far more than its apparent extent seemed to warrant.

He was a reserved man, with an adoration of love for this beautiful young woman curbed by an iron will so tightly that she had never guessed it. Not given to the luxury of self pity, there were yet moments—and this was one of them—when his lonely heart cried out passionately for her love, for just one hour of it before the impending shadow fell.

Left an orphan at an early age, Kate had grown up in the house of her guardian, Lawrence Winslow. On his occasional visits to the home of the senior member of his firm, Hilary had met and become interested in the shy, graceful, dark eyed child, whose quietness always

suggested a pathetically frustrated youth that dared him to pity its loneliness. When Winslow died, Hilary had reluctantly inherited the trust of a slender, fine-eyed young woman with whom he was already in love. Her property was so inconsequential as to have practically no bearing on her future. She was alone in the world, except for her lawyer, whose relation to her had been a business one, touched with wonderful thoughtfulness. The upshot of it was that Hilary had asked her, with misgivings, to marry him, and she had consented. He felt that it was in one way an injustice to her, but circumstances forced his hand. He was only thirty-five, and the gossip of his world found him altogether too young for the guardianship of so beautiful a girl. Wherefore, he had offered her the protection of his name as well as of his home. That had been two years before. He had often scourged himself for the sacrifice to which he had opened the way for her.

From the hall she led him into the library and gently forced him, greatly wondering, into a Morris chair.

"Let us go away from here into the country, Robert." The words burst from her like a cry.

The quick question in his eyes she answered at once. "Yes, I know. Mrs. Mason came here with occult allusions. I made her tell me. How could you, Robert? I did not know you could be so cruel."

"I wanted to spare you, dear. I did not want to take you from the life you love, Kate."

"The life I love." Her voice was hard. "Do you think I love functions and receptions and all the hollow claptrap of the life I lead, that they are anything more to me than a means to pass the time?"

"Poor child! I know—I understand," he said in a low voice infinitely gentle.

"You don't know. You never will," she broke out. "To think that I would value those things one jackstraw against your life."

He kissed the fine slender hand that rested on the chair back. "I think you are the best woman in the world, and the

most generous. I understand that, at least," he smiled.

"Generous!" her voice had an accent of scorn almost bitter. Would he never see the truth?

They had come to one of those rare moments when vital issues tremble in the balance, when a bell within rings across unplumbed depths of feeling. He was not a man given to impulses, but he yielded to one now.

Drawing her to the arm of the chair, Hilary for the first time in his life voiced his passion adequately. He told her, with a restraint that but emphasized its intensity, the story of his love; how he had held it a part of his contract with himself not to trouble her with it, and how with repression it had grown stronger month by month. He spoke of it now only that she might understand why he had not mentioned the matter of his failing health. He had been afraid to trust himself, lest in his weakness he might ask more than he had any right to expect.

She bent down and touched with her lips the hair that was beginning to gray his temples, a wave of color beating into her face at the unwonted display of feeling. Her eyes were wonderfully tender and bright, the joy that suffused her warm as spring sunbeats.

But she would not tell him yet. That ecstasy she meant to reserve till she let him know her story, too.

"I admired you always more than other men, Robert, even when I was a child, and used to see you come to the house. After Mr. Winslow died and you became my guardian, I liked you still better." Her voice broke, and she gave way to the rush of feeling that flooded her. "Oh, don't you see, Robert? I have loved you all these years—I married you to make you love me. But I couldn't offer what you did not ask. So I took refuge in the commonplace of my environment, made social interests for myself to hide the ache of my heart. Oh, Robert! We of little faith."

The tide that had flushed to his heart in waves left him dizzy. But he reached out blindly, caught her in his arms and swept her to his knees.

"My love—at last."

A Castle In Spain



MARGARET LONG always felt that the turning-point in her life was when she bought her castle in Spain. The wonder of wonders was its likeness to the fairy palace of her dreams in which her spirit had dwelt from the time that she began to love Hugh Purcell; and that was so long ago that she could scarcely remember its beginning. It seemed to her that her mind had slipped over every phase of this relationship, on the weary day that she bargained with the Marquis of Villegas for the home of his ancestors; and at one point she stopped with a pang as she recalled that "castles in Spain" are not proverbially built upon sure foundations. But yet she persisted until she had her way, to the loss of the greater part of her fortune, being held by some strange conviction that this was the path of her destiny.

And so she came to live in the thousand-year-old fortress between the mountains and the sea; and her heart took root in the low gray stronghold with its courtyard and fountains, its gardens that covered all the promontory, its terrace overhanging the blue waters of the bay. Round about, all the landscape made a

fit setting for her dreams: the olive-gardens and cork-groves and vineyards that climbed the mountains until they disappeared on the purple slopes where the golden cross of Our Lady of Izdaquil gleamed on the highest jagged peak; the gay fantastic farmsteads with their cypresses and peach orchards; the wide semi-circle of shining sands under the porphyry cliffs.

Nor was it less to her liking within the castle itself. She felt strangely at home under the

high, dark arches, surrounded by tapestried walls and heavy carved chests and chairs; she loved the dim chapel with its faded gilding and frescoes by Zurbaran, its atmosphere still redolent of the incense of past centuries; she reveled in the huge blue tiled kitchen, its shelves laden with copper and brass, its strings of pendant drying herbs, its enormous canopied hearth on which burned always two trunks of trees dragged forward from a hollow in the wall, as their ends fell to ashes.

But the true shrine of her heart in the house was the library, a vaulted room between the gardens and the sea, its shelf-covered walls crammed, often in

BY EDITH RICKERT

ILLUSTRATED BY THE REESES

Decorations by W. R. Stewart



She sought imaginary conversation with him in the garden

double rows, with incunabula and manuscripts, countless books in ancient leather bindings, stamped in gold with the mace and key of the house of Villegas.

It was, she was told, one of the famous mediæval libraries of the world, for which she had sacrificed gladly the greater part of her fortune; and this for the one reason that she knew how only in such a place as this would Hugh Purcell find the true home of his spirit.

And after that, there was nothing to do but wait, as she had waited, much of her life, for the home-coming of the

master. She had no hope that it would be soon—little hope that it would be ever. He had no knowledge that, as he worked day and night in the New World, against bitter odds, across the sea was waiting for him this library, full of treasure to enrich his soul; that daily some one—whom he remembered only occasionally, as he smoked, perhaps, in a half hour of idleness—hovered over a beautiful old table, made pretense of arranging pens and paper, or put a fresh red rose into the Venetian glass, or laid out one precious manuscript after another, before his

imagined presence. Love? He had no care for love, living in his dreams of work to be done. Work? She could not work, living in dreams of a love that might be hers if the ways of this world were not too hard. But for long years the ocean was between them.

She had but little news of him; he was always too busy to write, even if the terms of their old friendship had warranted an exchange of letters. She knew indirectly that notwithstanding burdens of poverty, of dependent relatives, of debts not his own assumed ungrudgingly, of illness, of hostility through envy, he was making a great name. He had written books; he had climbed from a small post in a little southern college to a professorship in a great eastern university; he was coming to be known abroad as a specialist in the romance literatures of the Middle Ages; his dicta on Spanish were being accepted as final.

She sent for his books and articles, and read them with a sort of painful pride and bitter exultation that they were so good, and that she alone, of all the people in the world, had the power to make them even infinitely better. And in this belief she counted not only upon the treasures of learning that she had heaped up for him in her Spanish library, but—and even more—upon the power of sympathetic understanding that she had been garnering up for him in her heart during all these years of their separation. But this he did not know; and whether from a deeply ingrained pride or from a superstitious fear of breaking the spell by putting her finger into the web of destiny, she was resolved that he must learn for himself and not from any unsought word of hers.

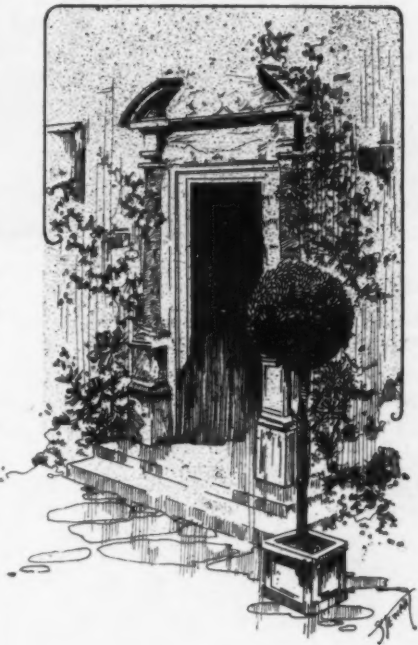
She made a sort of life for herself in that remote place.

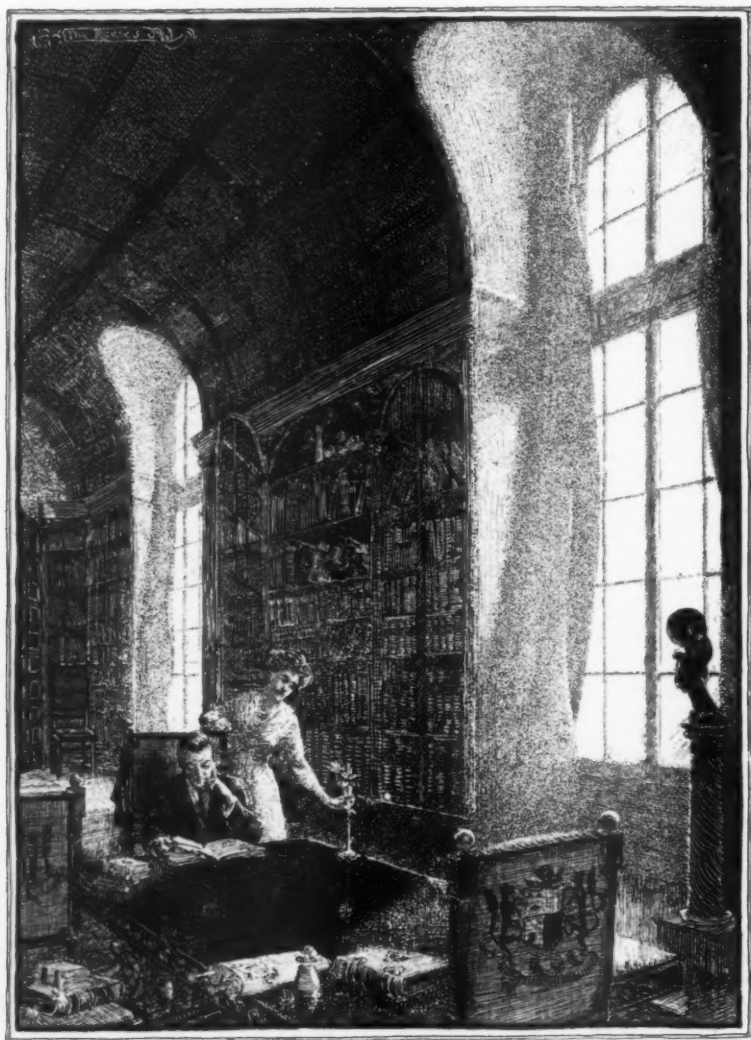
"If he should ever come," she said, "I must be ready."

Always a student, she studied more. She learned to know that great library better than anyone else in the world; she acquired a rare knowledge of Spanish; she went about among the country-folk, gathering their traditions and songs and dialects; she added, as her now moderate income permitted, to the treasures

of her house, more especially old prints and manuscripts; she worked hard at her music, and acquired even a little local fame for her knowledge of the wild Basque airs from the mountains; she was friendly with the Spanish gentlefolk, her neighbors, not so much as needing converse herself, as from a selfishly unselfish feeling that "some day," in that dim future-world, they might be useful to *him*.

And yet her truest life, she sometimes thought, was in the dreams that she played with, when she was weary of all these occupations. She deliberately sought imaginary companionship with him, both in the garden that she had made glorious, scarcely hoping that they might one day walk there together, and when she wandered among the defiles of the mountains and the far-away villages. He sat and smoked in her tapestried salon while she played and sang old airs; his chair stood by the log fire on the chilly evenings of autumn; on the terrace when she watched the summer sea. They shared all the house and the garden and the wide country round—everything, except the





She moved it gently until it shadowed his book

library, which was his own peculiarly. She might linger there to better his comfort, she might even sit on the threshold to help; but in the end, she could do no more than make the way easy. The work was his alone.

One day, a clear autumn day some seven years or eight after she had been living thus, she had with her morning chocolate a letter bearing the postmark of Paris. She looked a long time at the crabbed writing, of which she had some few other specimens treasured in her desk; and when at last she arrived at the

courage to read its message, she found that in quite an ordinary sequence of events, he had crossed the ocean, and now craved permission to come and see her in her Spanish castle, of which he had somehow heard.

It was not a letter to make the heart ache or leap; it was calmly reminiscent, politely eager. She sat very still on her terrace under a pergola of vines, and tried to realize the meaning to her of those few scratches of ink on paper. In two weeks or three, he would be in Spain—in the castle that she had made ready

for him. He would come over for the day from Fuenterrabia—that would be it. In two weeks or three, he would have come and gone on his way, leaving her only a few more memories to build dreams upon.

She went indoors and up to her room, and looked at herself as she had not done for years—then flung herself on the bed in unexpected weeping. She had watched the coming of lines and gray hairs, not greatly concerned while the future was so far away; but now that it threatened to become the very present, she was in a sudden panic over the ugliness of her pale face. He would be remembering the Margaret of nearly a decade ago; he would not be looking for such a woman as this.

Was it not better, first and last, to make excuses and run away into the mountains until he had gone by?

"I can't meet him—I can't! I'm afraid, after all these years!" she sobbed, as she tried to answer his note; and even through her tears she was driven to write a stiff little invitation that gave no hint of the tremors with which she was shaken.

And again she waited, this time with the knowledge that only days would pass before she would receive that second letter to set the time of their meeting. When it came, she had schooled herself to a certain calmness.

After all—she summed it up—the visit would be a matter of three hours or so: luncheon and talk and coffee on the terrace, a stroll through the gardens, a visit to the chapel, the library—

Then she would be alone again and could bear what must be borne.

It was on the very morning of the day appointed that she was suddenly beset by a host of new fears. She had become used to the thought that he would find her changed and ugly; but—what of himself? Perhaps he had grown old—

bald—fat; probably he wore spectacles; he might have a beard; he might be unrecognizable—he might—he might.

There was no end to the horrors in her imagination. He might even, for anything that she knew to the contrary, be married. Years ago, there had been rumors of a love affair; and if they had died away, it did not necessarily mean—

She had intended to await him in the salon, where in the dim light he would not at once see how she had changed; but at the sound of the carriage-wheels, she found herself, without previous volition, descending the great spiral stairway in the hall. She knew, almost without seeing, that he was waiting for her at the foot of the steps; and her heart leaped into her eyes as she felt that he was in all ways essentially the same. And in that marvelous moment, just before she extended her hand, she felt that he was studying her, even to the details of her gray dress and fichu and the red roses in her belt, with no sense of repulsion or of shock, but with a sudden light in his gray eyes that seemed to answer the gleam in her own.

The gap of eight years was suddenly blotted out. Words sprang to the encounter, and with a sudden sense of ease, they were laughing together because they had asked the same questions and both had forgotten to answer. But when they went out to luncheon on the terrace, under the pergola by the indigo-blue sea, there fell a sudden constraint like a veil between them.

She saw that he had grown much older, grayer, more deeply lined; she read in his face but too plainly that his struggle was not yet at an end, and she was doubly oppressed; by the wonder that he should be there at all, and by the slow ticking off in her own heart of the few moments before he would be gone.

She talked feverishly and at random, and could never remember afterwards what she had said at this time; and he,



it seemed, was well content to watch and to listen.

But when the coffee came and cigarettes, she felt that she could do no more, so leaned back and gazed at the sea and left him to his own devices.

Suddenly she became aware that he had repeated a question more than once, and at last she caught it:

"Are you never coming home?"

"I don't know—" She hesitated. "I am beginning to think this is my home."

"It suits you, certainly, this environment—" he was beginning.

But she changed the subject.

"Tell me about yourself—all you have been doing."

She felt herself blushing at her pretense of ignorance, and blushing still more when he appeared to notice her confusion.

"Oh, I haven't done anything much," he answered, with a gesture half-impatient. "I work along as I can."

"I have seen your books—some of them," she said softly.

He shrugged them away.

Then she grew bold for a moment:

"I wish you—you—could have your chance!"

He had been smoking and staring at the sea, but he removed his cigaret and turned upon her abruptly:

"How do you know—"

Then he laughed:

"Oh, no man has a fair chance, or at least not the chance he wants. But probably we all get as much as we deserve."

Clearly, she thought, his burdens had not been lifted. If he could work so well against odds, how if he were free?

"If you could choose—really—should you know how to get your chance?" she hazarded, timidly.

He had turned back to the sea, and was smoking with narrowed eyelids, as he said idly:

"Just now I feel as if

nothing could be better than this. If I could stay on here, I might be tempted to say, 'Chance be hanged!'"

She got to her feet, suddenly radiant with an emotion that she dared not admit into consciousness. To cover her confusion, she said in a tremulous voice that escaped her control:

"You haven't seen my garden yet. Come look at the roses!"

As they paced together the checkered alleys, in and out among the arbors and pergolas, he talked more freely—led on rather by her sympathetic silence than by any actual words of hers—to reveal his struggles, his aims, his defeated plans and hopes; while she, swinging her long chain between her fingers, felt that the golden moments were like it, linked together and slipping away by their own weight, so to speak, never to be recovered again.

"I'm boring you," he said suddenly. "I don't often let myself go like this."

She was able then to smile at him without visible emotion:

"I am glad you did. If only I could suggest—Is there no one?"

He looked curiously boyish as he said, with some embarrassment:

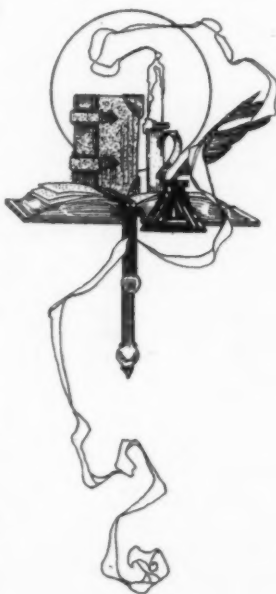
"I don't know that I want anyone—on the whole."

They were in an arbor of heliotrope then, and she reached for a handful of the purple blossoms before saying:

"I have saved my best treasure until the last. Will you come in now?"

She gave him but a moment with the Zurbarans, then laid hand on the curious bronze knob of the wide-paneled oak door of the library, pushed it open, and signed that he was to go in alone.

Then she closed it softly after him, and fled to a *prie-Dieu*, in the darkest corner of the chapel; there she sat down with her head on her hands, and clasping



her knees, so awaited the footsteps of Destiny.

But she knew in that long silence that it was she herself who must go seeking. No—not seeking! She spurned the thought with pride. By this time he would be lost in the Middle Ages; he would have forgotten times and trains; she must go in only to play Atropos, snapping off the chain of the golden moments.

She saw at a glance that she was right.

He had forgotten her house, herself. Her rarest treasures lay heaped on the long table where she had kept ready pens and ink and paper for more than eight years; and he sat among them, his head in his hands, blind and deaf to everything else in the world.

He did not hear her cross the room, or see or feel her standing by his side. She noted, with a sharp drawn breath, that the perfect red rose in the Venetian glass that she had placed there had been carefully set aside.

Not knowing how to attract his attention, she moved it gently until it shadowed his book.

And then he looked up and saw her standing there.

"I am so sorry," she said, scarcely above a whisper, "but your train is the last to-day; and if you must—"

She stopped because he so clearly had not heard.

"Margaret," he said, "what is the meaning of this?"

She pretended to believe that what he had said referred to the manuscript before him:



"You know best."

"You wilfully misunderstand!" he said, with a spark in his gray eyes.

She shrugged with a faint laugh:

"Everyone has a castle in Spain. Mine is none the more real because it is built on a stone foundation."

He rested his chin in his palms, gazing down at the manuscript again, as he said with a kind of slow stubbornness:

"Years ago, when we were first friends—but you knew how I was placed, or guessed, perhaps. Then you ran

away; I did not know you would stay so long. I wondered at the time, when I heard you were living in Spain. I could not dream of this—naturally; and now, you open the door of heaven to me—for half an hour."

"You would like to stay?" she asked, with a return of the same blind radiance that had possessed her for a moment on the terrace.

"God! It is temptation, but—"

She turned away from him and the books, and went to stand by the great window overlooking the sea; and after a moment, he followed her.

"I couldn't—not if I were free," he insisted. "I must do my work in my own way—against the odds, such as they are. I couldn't let you make a little Paradise on earth for me and then crawl into it—out of all the duties and obligations on the other side."

She looked at him very proudly:





"I never expected it. You are mistaken. This is *my* little Paradise—my castle in"—she could not finish for the significance of the phrase—"and you are in it only for the day."

But he was shrewder than she anticipated:

"Have you kept me out all these years?"

She parried as well as she could:

"Just as—well as I shall keep you out in the years to come."

His short laugh echoed her defeat.

"You see, I have nothing to offer you in return," he said. "If I had—"

"Nothing," she repeated dully, "in return for—what?"

With a gesture he indicated the room and its precious contents.

"This?" she cried. "Oh, I could burn all this without a thought—"

And there she stopped. The sentence was clearly impossible to finish.

In the silence between them, more golden moments slipped away.

At last she drew her breath hard:

"I'm afraid—you will miss your train."

He spoke with sudden savagery:

"I'm going to miss it; I mean to miss it if I have to tramp the roads all night! It's insolent presumption on my part, and yet if you haven't done all this for me—"

Her courage did not fail then; and she knew it was no time for lies:

"I have done it for you; but—what of that? Good-by."

"You are proud," he challenged her.

"I would not have you stay—now," she thrust back.

His voice half-failed him then:

"Not even if—if I had loved you—all these years?"

There came a sudden mist over the sea; she heard scarcely hear her own whisper:

"Have you?"

"Yes."

"Then—you would stay?"

"No, I cannot. I have told you."

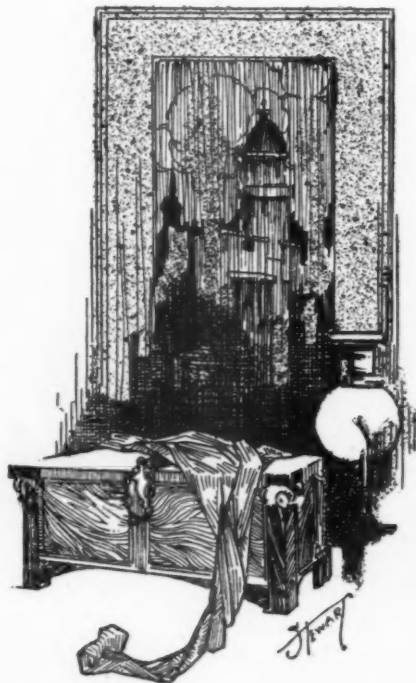
There was a long pause between them before she said:

"Then—I will go back—if you—ask me."

"And your castle in Spain?"

She held out both hands:

"I shall have that with me always. It is built upon my heart."





At the extreme end stood a man
leaning against a barrel

The Man With the Barrel

BY DAVE KING

Author of "Toward The Red Hills," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY IRMA DEREMEAUX

WHILE there was really nothing very mysterious about the manner of his coming to Hogumville, it was a bit out of the usual—unusual enough, in fact, to set working the leaven for one of those ever-recurring human comedies that cause the gods to smile, and sometimes to laugh, when they look down.

It occurred while the warehouse watchman (port-captain, by courtesy) was contesting one (?) game of solitaire in the wharfinger's over-heated office far out on the pier; and though from this distance the explanation is perfectly clear and logical, it might have served at the time to cast unpleasant shadows athwart the Captain's professional reputation.

According to the Captain's story, he made a long and careful observation of the bay and outer road and saw no floating thing of any kind; there was not even a smudge of smoke on the horizon,

though he must have admitted that there was some fog outside and that, it being around five o'clock in late November, his survey was not altogether reliable. The pier, save by himself, was deserted.

Fifteen minutes later he looked out and saw a goodly sized lake tug steaming straight out, black smoke rolling from her funnel, and what he took to be a Union Jack flapping insolently over her taffrail. At the extreme end of the pier, a place accessible by water only, stood a man leaning against a barrel; neither man nor barrel was there when the Captain sat down with "Old Sol." A far less vigilant sentinel than the Captain might have been puzzled—but not until he had ceased marveling at the Canadian tug-master's effrontery. Afterwards, when "The Man With the Barrel" had become a household phrase in Hogumville, the Captain's "mystery" deepened; the time shortened, the fog lifted, and

the tug took on ghostly lines in proper ratio as the Captain's reputation as a watchman suffered diminution.

"How'd ye git here an' what ye got?" demanded the indignant Captain.

Apparently the man, who was looking after the disappearing tug as if he regretted its departure, had not heard the watchman's approach; he turned suddenly in some confusion.

"Er—r—nothing—nothing but some samples," he stammered. "Where can I get a team to haul them to the railroad?"

He had answered the first part of the question by a jerk of his head toward Canada.

"Ye can't haul 'em nowheres till they're inspected!" snapped the Captain. "Don't ye know anything about customs?"

"Oh!" exclaimed the man, as if he had forgotten the tariff wall. "Where's the Inspector?"

He nervously fumbled in his vest-pocket for a moment, and then in some trepidation passed the Captain a green-back, which that faithful guardian tucked away without a word of acknowledgement.

"Roll her down to the warehouse an' I'll git him," ordered the Captain, not in the least placated. "It's his supper time, though," he added, tipping the barrel and letting it drop back. He eyed the man suspiciously as a dull metallic sound came forth, and again he tipped the barrel, this time remarking its great weight. The man grew very nervous and again asked where he might find a team. Without answering, the Captain walked away rapidly, locking the door of the warehouse, which covered the pier, when he had passed through.

Half an hour later he returned, followed by an official looking man in a blue cap; a much-winded, rotund gentleman brought up the rear, hugging the middle planks, fearful, and uncertainly. Both had been augmenting the gastric juices against the ordeal of supper, and, in addition, the official looking one was unduly charged with importance: he would have been a customs inspector in the heart of a free trade country. The man with the barrel, now

much agitated, pressed forward and sought the Inspector's hand as if he would place something in it, but was roughly brushed aside.

"Roll her in and knock out the head. We'll see what we've got," bawled the Inspector.

Whereupon the man, in seeming desperation, confronted him. The rotund gentleman had passed into the warehouse and the Captain, struggling with the barrel, did not see the man's successful effort to "shake hands" with the Inspector.

"Look here," said the man in pleading tones, "there's nothing dutiable in that barrel—nothing in it but some mineral samples. I don't mind you seeing them, but I don't want anyone else to know what I've got; it's private business."

As he finished there came the sound of a hatchet smashing in the head of the barrel.

"These men are all right," said the Inspector, with an assuring wink, and the two went inside where the blows of the hatchet were now falling fast. Just as the head gave way there entered, to the further discomfiture of the man, a fourth Hogumvillian, this one, apparently, a prosperous business man. Quite evidently he was expected, and there were no more to come, for the Inspector closed and securely fastened the door. The Captain brought a lantern and the four hung over the barrel while the man paced up and down helplessly.

"Well, here's a haul worth while!" chuckled the Inspector, lowering his voice and cautioning the others with a finger on his lips. "I should say that it is *private* business."

The rotund gentleman was beaming; the business man was rubbing his hands in the manner that his nose had said he would rub them and the Captain seemed not to regret the mystery of the tug.

What they looked upon was indeed gladdening. At first glance the barrel seemed full to its very chine of native silver—free and comparatively clean, just as it had been torn from its fissure in the mine. Slabs as large as the hand and as thick formed a top layer and beneath was a ragged mass of the pre-

cious metal mixed with pinkish gray rock, its matrix, the largest pieces of which appeared to be more than half silver. There were heavily studded crystals, thin sheets holding pieces of the pinkish rock together, wonderful specimens of "wire" and great, jagged nuggets, every piece fit for a collector's cabinet—a perfect "jewelry shop." There were, perhaps, three hundred pounds of the ore, and an experienced miner or mineralogist would unhesitatingly have estimated the whole at fifty or more per cent, pure. The same authorities would have said that it came from very near the surface for, apparently, it was considerably stained from the rust and red of iron and vegetable matter.

Red automobiles, yachts, strings of ponies, all the wonderful things dreamed of in the hills, would have flashed through the brain of the prospector who beheld such virgin treasure; what passed in the minds of the four bending over the barrel was voiced in the Inspector's next remarks, which he addressed to the man:

"That's the best single trick ever turned on the Silver Islet mine!" he exclaimed. "Captain Trethewey and his watchmen must be asleep."

The man did not seem to understand, whereat a smile went around.

"Head it up again, Cap," ordered the Inspector, "and get it up to Mr.—er—Oh—" turning to the man and at the same time placing his hand on the business man's shoulder, "this is Mr. Meyer, the big jeweler here; he understands. This is Mr. Getthis," indicating the rotund gentleman, "and Captain Smith—all wise. Come on!"

The man stood with his back to the door, barring egress.

"My name's Brown," he said, with some show of pride and determination, "and the barrel stays right here until I can get it to the railroad!"

"That's all right, Mr. Brown," assured the Inspector. "Mr. Meyer has a safe place for it to-night and," drawing him aside and dropping his voice to a whisper, "you can do business with him to-morrow."

Mr. Brown was silent for a moment

and then, as if resigned to the necessity of making a disclosure, he said:

"Gentlemen, you are making a mistake. I am not a 'high-grader' and this ore never saw the Silver Islet mine—can't you see that it's from the surface? It—it's—out of my own property across the lake and I'm on my way to Chicago to interest capital in it; this ore is not for sale!"

In a manner that did not seem boastful, he told them of a great strike that he had made—a strike that would rival Silver Islet and open the sleepy Canadian eyes—from which he had taken this lot in the course of prospecting; it was a sample which he was taking out to use in his promotion work. Truth hung on Mr. Brown's words; there was conviction in his manner. For the first time it occurred to the listeners that the ore in the barrel was not just like the Silver Islet ore they had seen and handled; the man was not like the other ore thieves they had known, ready to sell and sneak away as soon as possible.

The indulgent smiles that followed Mr. Brown's first statement gave way to looks of astonishment and in turn to open credence.

"I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Brown," said Mr. Meyer, extending his hand. "How long will you be in our city?"

Mr. Brown shook hands with all of them, pleasantly, but with sufficient reserve to remind them that he was the late injured party, and on the assurance that he could not get out of Hogumville that night and that his treasure would be safest there, consented that the barrel should go to Mr. Meyer's store. Before leaving the warehouse he exacted a promise of secrecy, explaining that he wished to avoid any excitement over his discovery, for the reason that he had not yet secured all the ground he wanted. When the time came to announce it, there would be plenty of opportunity for everybody, for he believed that he had found a great mother-lode and that a big mining camp would spring up there.

Mr. Brown, Mr. Getthis, and Mr. Meyer sat in the rear of the latter's store that night and talked until very late. After a great deal of argument Mr.



They sat in the store that night and talked until very late

Brown had reluctantly agreed to remain over and meet some of the other gentlemen of Hogumville, though he was sure that nothing could come of it; he did not think that Hogumville could handle his proposition, besides he was obligated, in a way, to his capitalistic friends in Chicago. Mr. Getthis was to bring his brother, who was president of the Bank of Hogumville, and Mr. Meyer's partner would be there. One or two other opulent gentlemen might be called in, but the strictest secrecy was to be maintained.

Mr. Meyer's parting words at the door of Mr. Brown's hotel, voiced the hope that that gentleman would be relieved of the necessity of going to Chicago.

For his part, Mr. Brown had stood off and promised nothing. He was willing, of course, to let the gentlemen talk it over and to talk with them, but they would find it a pretty big proposition. The cost of a mine, he told them, truthfully, does not begin until after you have

bought and paid for it. Mr. Brown slept well that night.

Within a circle of half-a-dozen men, all of whom, according to the lumbermen of the region, were foremost in holding Hogumville up to the significance of her name, there was much suppressed excitement during the next few days. Mr. Brown had early discarded his dirty, worn, prospecting outfit and blossomed out in a sober, business-man's rig—for which he paid Mr. Meyer's cousin something like seventy-five dollars—and appeared as the brisk, well-informed mining man.

In the frequent meetings he listened quietly to the many propositions, but he was hard to do business with. Under no circumstances would he sell the whole outright; he flatly refused to consider any proposal that contemplated giving up control in a stock company to be formed, though later he suggested means of getting around the objectionable feat-

ures of such a deal. During the development period, at least, he, being a miner and knowing the ground, must have full power. He was stiff as a poker and shrewd as a fox where any possible interest of his own might be involved and the Hogumvillians were filled with admiration for him. Mr. Brown had the goods in large, small, and intermediate packages.

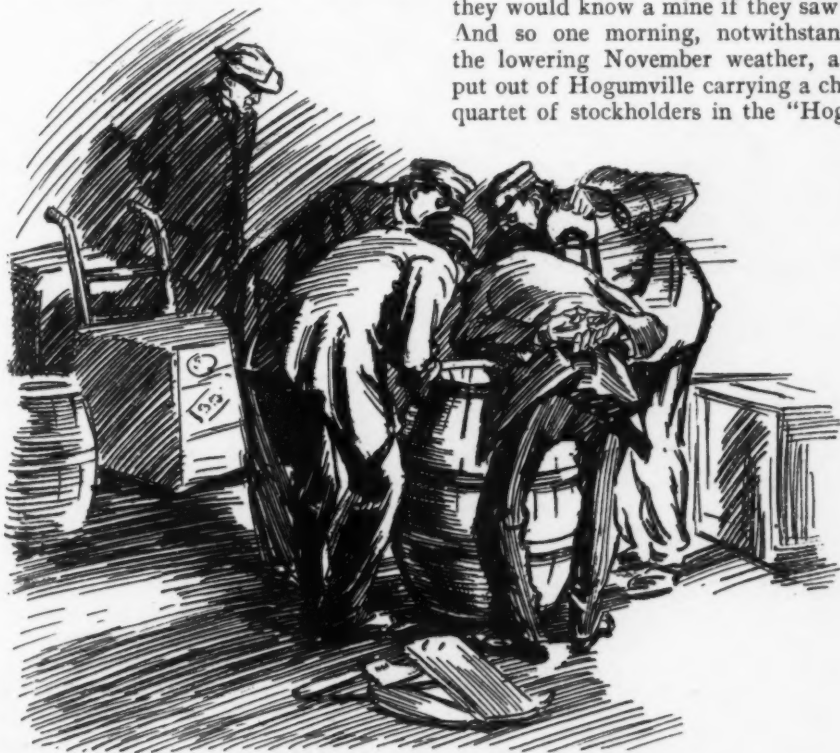
Finally an agreement was reached. A stock company was to be formed; Mr. Brown would give up control, but he was to be protected by a certain pooling arrangement and an ample treasury was to be provided. Mr. Brown was to have a certain large amount of cash, an equal amount in six months, etc., (the fixing of the deferred payments took up much time) and he was to be managing director. The Getthis brothers were to handle the treasury stock on a fifteen per cent. commission; the bank was to be made the depository; Mr. Meyer was to be treasurer, and his cousin president.

Surprisingly, Mr. Brown overlooked just one little loop-hole, which Mr. Meyer and Mr. Getthis, banker, were quick to see.

"Mr. Brown is a very smart man," observed Mr. Meyer, when the two were walking home that evening, "but you remember that pool agreement? If it ever comes up, we got him."

All this, of course, was conditioned upon what Mr. Brown could show on the ground in support of his claims. The papers were drawn and signed, the incorporation started, and Mr. Brown, who up to this time had disclosed absolutely nothing as to the location of his bonanza, was ready to show them.

"An expensive expert is not necessary," Mr. Brown assured them. "You can all go—you don't need an expert to tell you that silver is silver, and you can see all you will want to see sticking out of the ground." Mr. Meyer did not want anybody to give him pointers on silver and the others were equally confident that they would know a mine if they saw one. And so one morning, notwithstanding the lowering November weather, a tug put out of Hogumville carrying a chosen quartet of stockholders in the "Hogum-



The Captain brought a lantern and the four hung over the barrel

ville Mining Development Company," including the brothers Getthis and Mr. Mc... ostensibly a hunting party.

A snow-storm, which Mr. Brown seemed to enjoy, broke out of the North that afternoon; a half gale swept the great lake, and the Hogumville gentlemen were for putting back. Mr. Brown was not for that; he had chartered that tug for the purpose of giving them an advance view of a great production and the show must go on.

Unable to land on account of rocks and a dangerous sea, they spent a night of misery wallowing off the mouth of a little river that cut around "Hogum Mountain," as Mr. Brown had named the hill that was to be the source of Hogumville's future wealth and glory, and when they got ashore the next morning, there was nothing lacking for a shipwreck effect but a wireless outfit and a

Jack Binns. Tired and logy from loss of sleep, they followed Mr. Brown through miles of foot-deep snow, up, up, forever up, and at mid-afternoon arrived, almost exhausted, at the place of the white shrine.

Mr. Brown seemed fresh and in high spirits; he tore away the brush and snow that hid his treasure-house and leaped into the mouth of a short tunnel, the others at his heels. No one had been there in his absence, for which, loud and fervently, he thanked God, but there was considerable ice in the tunnel, especially where the vein slashed down the face. Mr. Brown was rather pleased with the ice—"Helps hide it," he said. A maimed and very dull pick was at hand, with which Mr. Brown cleared away and the exclamations of wonder began.

Along the floor, up the face and into the roof of the tunnel ran a vein ranging from two to five inches in width, which

was literally studded with silver—it was wonderful. The entire population of a certain state not far from Joplin would have filed into that tunnel and come out satisfied. After the Hogumville gentleman had laboriously picked out ten or fifteen pounds of the "clear quill," Mr. Brown, reminding them of the time, took them outside and above; there, in several places, he kicked away the snow and protecting brush and showed them the outcrop in shallow excavations—the same spine of fabulously rich ore. Mr. Brown had become the weary one of the party; the others were in a state bordering on lunacy. When they had looked and picked to their hearts' content and every pocket was



The journey down the mountain was almost a race

bulging with specimens, Mr. Brown took them in a merry chase over the hill and showed them his location stakes and notices; they had already seen his recorded papers. It was enough. Hogumville, as represented there on the snowy mountain, was at his feet.

The journey down the mountain to the tug was almost a race; the gentlemen wanted to get back to Hogumville and close, but Mr. Brown was not yet satisfied. He was up early next morning, and taking Mr. Meyer and the banker he went back and staked half a dozen claims—extensions of the bonanza—all in the names of his new partners. Building and tunnel sites were selected and then—back to Hogumville, the most enthusiastic company of "experts" that ever "examined" a mine.

For some days after the return to Hogumville Mr. Brown was a very busy man. First, there was the closing up of the deal; then the perfecting of the incorporation and arrangements for the beginning of operations. Hogumville was to be headquarters for the mine and where the Canadian tariff would permit, was to have the mine's great trade. Mr. Brown liked the town; he proposed to locate his family there and join in the movement for its up-building. Of course he would build; he paid Jim Bradley, the Customs Inspector, two-fifty for an option on a sightly plot of ground and for speculative purposes he made a similar deal with Captain Smith.

Several large deals for business property were under discussion, but there was one particular piece of unimproved property owned by a Duluth lumber magnate sojourning in Europe, which Mr. Brown wanted. One day the representative of the Duluth man appeared and Mr. Brown bought for twenty thousand cash. This, with other considerable sums which Mr. Brown had drawn out for investment in Hogumville and for personal purposes, ran his bank account pretty well down, but it did not matter; Mr. Brown had other resources, besides the mine would be producing handsomely in ninety days.

Hogumville was greatly pleased. The vacant lots in the heart of the town, long



On some hilltop preparing another salt

an eye-sore to the citizens, would now be improved. New life seemed to have come to the old town.

In due course the time came when it was just, proper, and expedient to apprise the world of the great strike in general and the good fortune of certain Hogumvillians in particular. The mine locations had all been perfected and it was no longer fair to capital and the struggling masses to hold back the good news. Already a few favored citizens outside the original circle had, by a special, supplementary agreement, been let in on the ground floor; Mr. Brown had very reluctantly parted with some of his stock for cash, but the world waited, unconscious of the ripening melon.

Chicago, where Mr. Brown's moneyed friends still held out, was to be given the first chance after Hogumville had been helped. Accordingly, one beautiful, never-to-be-forgotten day, Mr. Brown, accompanied by the rotund Mr. Getthis, departed for that fortunate metropolis, taking along the barrel of silver for show purposes. Mr. Getthis was to open an office for the stock campaign and Mr. Brown, after he had introduced Mr. Getthis and purchased some machinery,

for which purpose he had taken along most of the treasury funds, was to return to Hogumville and the mine and send down some more ore—enough to make that office look like the interior of a government mint. Ah, those were great days in Hogumville.

It is time wasted to hope that a certain coterie of Hogumvillians will ever quite recover from the shock they received when, one day a week later, there came to Mr. Getthis, banker, a telegram from Mr. Getthis, rotund, asking if Mr. Brown had returned to Hogumville and stating that he had disappeared with the barrel and most of the office furniture. If the patients had any chance at all after the first terrible blow, it was reduced to the point of extreme unction when next day the Duluth man's office, answering a wire, declared that he had not sold his Hogumville property and did not intend to; and when, some time later, a Silver Islet detective succeeded in tracing a barrel of rich ore as far as Hogumville, the Heavens closed down, enveloping

that part of the world in perpetual gloom.

Only sadness possessed them the following spring when, after many strenuous efforts, they finally found the hole on the hill-top across the lake. Possibly Mr. Getthis, banker, swore a little when he jumped into the tunnel and found that every ounce of its shining treasure had been picked out and carried away, leaving a deep gash in the rock that formerly had been the abiding place of a stringer of bull quartz. If so, the Recording Angel surely overlooked it, for Mr. Getthis was not himself at the time.

Somewhere, perhaps aboard his yacht loafing off sunny Mediterranean ports, perhaps on some distant hill-top preparing another "salt"—somewhere—Mr. Brown continues to breathe the sweet air of liberty. He alone knows whether the little play was written especially for Hogumville, or Hogumville merely butted in and stole the spot-light and the stage away from a more metropolitan center.

The Redemption of Rainbow Ryan

BY JOHN BARTON OXFORD

MR. BARTHOLOMEW RYAN, better known to his own coterie by reason of the purple and much fine linen of his raiment as "Rainbow," poked down the pier where the Frost Line boats docked and stumbled up the gang-plank of the *Winthrop*, with a certain well defined feeling of disgust, not un-mixed with something which amounted almost to self-pity.

They were shoddy old boats, these craft of the Frost Line, condemned long since by another line of coastwise steamers to the eastward. Ryan hated them with all the intensity of his fastidious soul; he hated, too, the shoddy crowds that traveled on them, and the general air of laxity and an eye solely to the dollar with which the line was conducted.

But Rainbow Ryan had fallen upon one of those evil times, which cropped

up perennially in his somewhat checkered career, when Fortune had turned her face from him and left him no choice in the matter. With him, at present, it was a case of any port in a storm; and the Frost Line boats offering the only port upon the troubled horizon, Mr. Ryan had betaken himself thither, albeit with much loathing and many heavy groanings of his spirit.

There were countless other lines, any one of which Mr. Ryan would have chosen to this, had circumstances permitted; but circumstances decidedly did not permit, for Mr. Ryan's face and Mr. Ryan's vocation had become far too well known to certain watchful stewards.

He had made good hauls off of those other lines—rare good hauls, some of them—and had he been content to salt down his earnings before the storm of

disfavor fell upon him, he might have rolled in velvet for quite a period. But Mr. Ryan's disposition was distinctly venturesome, and venturesome dispositions are prone to be forced to face sudden crises. Nor had Mr. Ryan proved any exception to this unfortunate rule.

Therefore, when disaster overtook his ventures, and he was driven once more to recouping his losses by his wonderful legerdermain with the fifty-two cards in the deck, he had found his former field of operation closed tight to him. Which accounted for his appearance on the deck of the *Winthrop*, with a grim smile on his face, an overweening disgust in his heart, and a feeling of inward certainty as he glanced at the other passengers about him, that here he would find no birds worth the plucking.

However, with every other line of boats running out of port closed against him, it was this or nothing, and before it should prove nothing, Mr. Ryan decided to give the thing a decent try.

Once the dock was behind them, Ryan went to his stateroom, a narrow little hole smelling villainously of bilge, donned a cloth cap and a cheerfully prosperous air, which latter he was far from feeling, then returned to the deck, and sauntered up and down, sizing up the situation thoroughly.

The *Winthrop's* passengers gave little promise. They were for the most part a weary, seedy lot, and the risks they took in traveling on the crumbling old boats of this line were evidently offset to them by the material reduction in fare the Frost Line boasted over its competitors.

With a feeling that this line, too, might just as well be closed to him as were the others, so far as any opportunity for his own peculiar accomplishments were concerned, Ryan, when they had finally pounded and slopped an uncertain way into the sound, went below for dinner.

Beside him at the table sat a big, broad-shouldered, ox-like man, ruddy of features and gruff of voice; but it was good-natured gruffness, as Ryan was soon to learn. The big man opened a tentative conversation, and Ryan, his eyes narrowing speculatively, joined in.

From his new acquaintance Ryan learned that the former was the captain of a coasting schooner, and that he was bound homeward for a brief visit with his family while the vessel was unloading. Unlike most men who follow the sea, he proved an eager and an entertaining talker. He spun yarns for the seemingly engrossed Ryan, he showed him photographs of the family; he even hinted boyishly and with many chuckles of the good returns this last trip of his had netted him.

It was at this piece of information that Rainbow Ryan sat up and took notice. He praised the captain's family; he flattered adroitly the captain himself; he chuckled and joked and grew confidential. All in all, he was the decidedly engaging person he could be whenever he chose to do so. When dinner was finished, the captain felt as if he had fallen in with an old, old friend.

They went on deck and found two chairs in a secluded corner well aft. Here the captain spun more yarns, the while he smoked one of Ryan's really excellent cigars.

The rest was easy. Cautiously, guardedly, with nothing to arouse the captain's suspicions, Ryan steered the conversation towards the subject of cards. He could have wept with joy when the burly mariner disclosed his propensities for a quiet game, and displayed a childish pride in his own skill and luck.

In less than half an hour they were seated together in the captain's stateroom, and the latter was chuckling mightily over his first streak of luck.

Ryan was a consummate artist in his own line. Gradually the stakes were increased. Gradually, too, he began to win. But not too much nor yet too often. Now and then, when the captain held the better hand, Ryan watched him as he hauled in the stakes. There was a gleam in his eyes Mr. Ryan had seen in other eyes countless times. He wanted to shout with joy, for it told him his opponent was a born gambler, and Mr. Ryan needed money, just then; he needed it badly.

The play went on. The captain resorted more and more frequently to the

worn leather wallet in the inside pocket of his vest. But now his nostrils were dilated. There was a feverish glow in his eyes. Now and then as he dealt the cards the big hands showed a hint of a tremor. Ryan took a deep breath of satisfaction. The need for caution was passed. The man could be played without gloves, now.

"Tell you what," suggested the big voice eagerly, "let's liven it up a little. This is gettin' sorter slow. Let's make it a show-down, cold hands; five a crack. What do you say?"

Ryan's eyebrows were lifted doubtfully.

"We're going it pretty stiff now," he demurred, with a fitting show of reluctance.

The captain reached over to smite him in friendly fashion with one huge paw.

"Oh, come on!" he urged. "Be a sport! I'm the loser."

"Well, if you put it that way, of course," Ryan said. "All right. Just as you say. Whose deal? Yours, isn't it?"

Steadily the captain lost. Again the stakes were doubled at his suggestion, and again he was the loser by so much the more each hand.

At last he took out the old wallet, hastily ran over its contents, and shook his big head.

"I guess I'll have to quit," said he. "My own money's all gone. The rest of this in here is the vessel's half of the freight money. I aint settled up for this trip yet."

Ryan was instantly all sympathy. "Look here, I don't want to do you up like this after the pleasant time we've had together," said he. "Luck's coming your way pretty soon. It's bound to. I don't want all this I've got of you, anyway. Here, let me lend you a little till it does turn."

He thrust a hand into his pocket, and with an impulsive movement drew out a roll of bills. Rest assured Rainbow Ryan had first sized up his man accurately.

The captain's weather-beaten face reddened, even under the heavy coat of tan.

"No, sir," he shouted, pushing the proffered bills aside. "Not by a blamed

sight! When I lose, I lose. That part of it's up to me."

Then he smiled sheepishly. "Excuse me!" he apologized hastily. "I didn't mean that I can't appreciate your offer. Don't think that. But I guess I aint the kind of a tin-horn that borrows money to play on when he's lost his own in a game that's fair and square, with your chances for gittin' stung just as mine were."

Ryan nodded his understanding of the other's feelings in the matter. It was a commending, virtuous nod, that inclination of his head.

"I was merely thinking that some of this," he said, tapping the bills before him, "is really yours. I've had most unreasonable luck the past few minutes. It can't run like that forever. It's bound to turn soon. It's only a question of a half-hour or so, when most of these winnings of mine will be back in your pocket."

The captain brought down one doubled fist on the edge of the berth, the while he smiled foolishly.

"I guess I aint got much nerve. Don't play enough probably, for one thing," he confessed sheepishly. "'Course that luck's goin' to turn, and I'm goin' to have some of that coin back, but I'll play with my own stuff for a little while yet without borrowin', I guess. Anyways, I ruther think the vessel can afford to back me once in awhile. Let's make it fifteen a crack this time. Your deal."

Ryan picked up the cards. He dropped his eyes that the other might not see the gleam of satisfaction in his own. It was decidedly well filled even yet, that old leather wallet.

Again the play went on in silence, and again Mr. Ryan's luck seemed wonderful to the unsuspecting captain.

At last the captain rubbed his head dazedly and looked at his watch.

"It's gittin' late," he said a bit unsteadily. "You've got six hundred off me, aint you?"

"Something like that," Ryan returned with a sorrowful shake of his head.

The captain reached for his wallet and ran over the bills it still contained. Then from another pocket he dug up more bills and from another, still more.

"There's all I got," he said slowly, "exceptin' just enough chicken feed to git home on. There's just five hundred dollars. I'll play you one hand—just one—for what there is there. If you win it, well and good. If you lose, you'll still be a hundred to the good. We'll make this the last—positively the last."

Ryan's teeth came together with a click. "All right!" he said almost sharply.

"Cut for deals," said the captain.

In silence each split the deck. The captain had a four spot; Rainbow Ryan, a deuce.

Deftly the cards were riffled and Ryan held them towards the captain.

"Cut!" he said, in the same terse tones.

"Go ahead," said the captain, disdaining the offer.

The cards were dealt. Dry-lipped the big mariner picked his up and a gleam of triumph was in his eyes.

"I guess I got 'em comin' at last," he cried. "I knew it'd have to change. I got three kings."

He threw them onto the blankets of the berth. Mr. Ryan was smiling grimly. He had taken no chances, as the four aces in his hand were ready to testify.

"And I've got—" he began quietly, starting to lay his hand beside the captain's.

But the sentence was never finished. It was cut short by three sharp blasts of the whistle, sounding in quick succession. There was a bellowed order from somewhere on deck; then a terrific crash, that heeled the old *Winthrop* far to port and sent the two men prone to the floor.

There was a roar of steam, a splintering, grinding shock; footsteps padded on the deck; voices shouted and cursed; someone screamed sharply twice and then the lights went out.

"God!" came the captain's heavy voice. "We're hit. Somethin's run into us—and in this old tub!" He groped for the stateroom door and opened it. "Come on. Get outer here, quick!" he yelled to Ryan.

But even in that moment of stress, Ryan fumbled for the pile of bills on the berth, found it, and thrust them into his

pocket before he followed the captain, whom he could hear bellowing to him from the narrow passageway outside.

Women were running to and fro, wailing and sobbing; men were shouting to one another, and over it all the screaming hiss from the broken steam pipes sounded like some great, stricken thing, gasping for breath.

The deck lurched and shivered beneath their feet. There was a cracking and groaning throughout the hull.

"She's goin' down, sure'n fate," said the captain to Ryan, who groped along just behind him. "Feel her. She aint got no compartments. Oh, my God! And all them women on her, too!"

He found a door leading to the deck, tried it, and then with one mighty blow of his fist sent it crashing outward.

"This way, this way!" he bellowed. "Out on deck, everybody!"

Ryan staggered through the doorway to the canted deck. Above, in a cloudless sky, burned great unwinking stars. All about the deck swarmed the panic-stricken passengers, some raving, some dumb in their terror. A part of the crew under two officers were striving to clear the boats.

To starboard, the great black bulk of a five-masted schooner, her bowsprit gone and her foremast hanging over her side, was drifting away into the night.

Ryan saw the big coaster captain leap forward and lend a hand with one of the boats; he saw him fighting back the mob of men who rushed down upon it; heard him bellowing for the women to be passed up, and saw him lifting them into the boat.

It was all like some wild nightmare. Ryan, spent and shaken, scarce realizing what he did, pulled the jumble of bills from his pockets, rolled them with the rest he had and snapped an elastic band about them.

"Twelve hundred dollars!" he murmured to himself dazedly. "Most twelve hundred dollars!"

Then, all at once he realized that twelve hundred dollars meant much—very much to him; and with the realization came another—that life meant far more.

With a wild yell he lowered his head and charged straight for the nearest boat; but a mighty blow toppled him to the deck and sent him rolling to the rail.

"Women first, you dog!" roared an angry voice.

Unsteadily he got to his feet, set his teeth, and lowered his shoulders for another charge. But before he could take a step there was a lurch, a roll; the water came swashing over the deck where he stood.

He gripped the rail and screamed impotently. He shook one clenched fist above his head. His fingers closed over the big roll in his pocket and he sobbed chokingly.

Then all at once he was aware of the captain's huge frame beside him. Something was thrust into his hands.

"I was afraid I shouldn't find you," the captain was panting. "Grab this! Hold it tight! She's goin' down right off. Hold your breath when you go under and don't lose your head. Steady now! We'll come through all right!"

There was the sound as of a mighty sigh. The water closed over his head. He felt himself whirled hither and thither, his grip all but torn from the door which he clutched with the desperation of despair.

His lungs seemed bursting; there was a frightful pressure on his head and shoulders; and through it all his agonized mind kept up its incessant wail, "Twelve hundred dollars! Twelve hundred dollars!"

Ages later, it seemed, half-strangled, weak, giddy, he caught the glint of stars above his head. A strong arm was supporting him. He saw the coaster captain's big red face close to his own. Weakly he began to sob.

"You'd better get up on the door. It'll bear you; it's big enough!" the captain was saying while he half-pushed, half-lifted Ryan to the bobbing raft. "I'm all right. I been in water before. Courage now, old chap. Someone'll pick us up before long. See them searchlights from some other steamer playin' all around. They'll hit us before a great while, and when they see us they'll have us aboard in the shake of an eye. Don't

lose your nerve. You're all right now."

A flood of light suddenly all but blinded them; then it was whisked away and back again. Following it came the creak and splash of oars.

Ryan felt himself lifted in and laid on the bottom of the boat; he was dimly aware that the captain, assisted by a man on either side, was threatening to sink the little craft as he clambered briskly in over the gunwale.

Then the oars creaked again as the boat sped back towards the steamer with the sweeping searchlight in the distance.

"How you feelin', old pal?" the captain inquired as he settled himself by Ryan's side. "Gee, she went down quick when she did go. I run about like a wild man when she begun to settle. I was afraid I wa'n't goin' to find you, though, before she finally went. I wa'n't goin' to let anyone like you go to the bottom, if I could help it—not after you'd been as white to me as you had, offerin' to lend me money, and all that."

Rainbow Ryan choked, and turned away his head. One hand was thrust into his pocket and out came a soggy, sodden roll of bills.

"Say," he said, "say, that last hand—for the five hundred, you know—it was yours. You had the best hand. I grabbed up the money when we had to cut for it. Here it is. It's yours. You had the best hand. Your kind always holds better hands than my kind, though maybe you don't always know it, and maybe you don't always win on 'em."

"You had three aces at least," the captain declared. "I saw that much when you was layin' your cards down, just before the whistle begun to blow."

Ryan shook his head.

"I tell you you had the best hand," he said with a strange break in his voice, "and, I'll tell you, you'll always have the best hands. Maybe there aint so much money in 'em, but they pay better in the long run."

Slowly the captain stuffed the bills into his pocket. Slowly he held out his hand.

"I guess I understand," he said, a sudden intelligence in his eyes. "I guess, too, you've held one of them hands you're talkin' about yourself, once."



The Latest Plays *by* Louis V. De Foe

Mme. Bertha Kalich
who plays
Joan in "The Witch"
Photograph by Moffett Studio, Chicago

NOW that the New Theatre Company has resolved to go trooping forth in the Spring, after the fashion of itinerant theatrical bands for whom no group of benevolent and dilettante millionaires has provided a palatial and permanent home, one is under obligation to record one or two more of its midwinter attempts to establish a répertoire.

From the very outset, the triangular directorate which rules the New Theatre's destinies has developed a peculiar genius for selecting plays that have neither fulfilled the institution's intellectual mission nor moved its clientèle to ecstasy. While the quality of the acting, particularly in subordinate characters, has been better than is generally to be found elsewhere, the average merit of the performances has been far beneath the expected standard.

THE play of "The Witch" is a good example of the New Theatre's peculiar viewpoint. The drama, dealing with seventeenth century witchcraft hysteria in Scandinavia, was originally the work of Mr. H. Weirs-Jenssen, a Norwegian playwright. Mr. Herman Hagedorn, a Harvard professor who has no practical knowledge of the theatre, changed it into its present English form and adapted its *locale* to fit the bloody religious persecutions in Salem in 1692. Then the New Theatre added Mme. Bertha Kalich, a half-Anglicised Roumanian actress, to its stock company to impersonate the leading character. To all intents and purposes Mme. Kalich's status is that of a star. The New Theatre professes to abhor stars, yet it has already employed half a dozen.

Its heroine, *Joan Hawthorne*, is a

Portuguese girl who has immigrated with her mother, long since dead, to the Massachusetts colony, where she became the wife of *Absalom Hawthorne*, an elderly minister, unconscionable bigot and famous witch-baiter. She is heartsick of her cheerless, mismated life and ready to lend an ear to the blandishments of *Gabriel*, old *Absalom's* son by a former marriage, just her own age, and home from a long absence in Europe. Shortly before the youth's return the play's keynote of superstition is struck when *Goody Whitlock*, an aged hag and suspected witch, is pursued into Joan's house by the villagers, only to be dragged forth and hanged. In her frenzy the old woman accuses Joan's mother of having practiced the black art. The charge terrifies the young wife and takes deep root in her imagination.

As the play proceeds, it grows evident that *Gabriel* and *Joan* are deep in a clandestine infatuation, unsuspected by all except old *Absalom's* mother, a venerable, meddling hag who jealously guards the minister's home and spies upon his young wife. There are some scenes of witch-baiting at this point which give incident to the play and disclose the fact that *Joan* believes that she, too, has made a covenant with Satan. Once she willed that *Gabriel*, her lover, appear before her, and he mysteriously came. Now she is positive she is a witch. Yet still her sinful passion for *Gabriel* grows.

The pair take advantage of *Absalom's* absence at the death-bed of a parishioner for a midnight tryst in the cottage. In her passion *Joan* expresses a wish that her husband may die. He appears presently to surprise the young couple together and, with forebodings of the true state of affairs, asks *Joan's* forgiveness for having led her into his dull life, and wonders if she has not wished him dead, adding, for her consolation, perhaps, that he once performed a great service for her mother by defending her from a charge of witchcraft.

Joan, in her overwrought state, acknowledges her unhappiness and bursts out in a confession of her guilty love for *Gabriel*. She also admits that she has

often hoped that her husband might die—in fact, that she has repeated the wish that very night. Whereupon, the aged preacher, exhausted from rowing his boat across the bay in a storm, and crazed with rage and grief over his wife's faithlessness, topples over with apoplexy and dies.

The guilty pair, horrified at what both believe to be a conclusive manifestation of diabolical power, sit in vigil through the night over *Absalom's* body and concoct a story of their devotion to him and of his peaceful and much mourned end. But they have not reckoned on the vigilant *Goodwife Abigail*, who divines the truth and alarms the neighbors. Bells clang and lights appear in the windows. Soon the witch-baiters in full cry enter the death chamber. *Joan* has rehearsed what she has intended to say, but terror and remorse overcome her. "Lies! All lies!" cries the revengeful old hag as she commands *Joan* to perform the "test of touch." The girl in her self-delusion dares not place her hand on the dead man's brow. In her delirium of fear she proclaims that she is a witch and is led away to her death as her lover, now convinced of her diabolical powers, turns from her and joins her persecutors.

The melodrama is beautifully staged—trust the New Theatre for that. The acting is efficient, without being brilliant. Mme. Kalich impersonates *Joan*, the Portuguese girl, using a German accent in her moments of stress. She is effective in her calmer moods, but when she abandons herself to passion her acting becomes hard—the method is always visible beneath the effect. Mr. Ben Johnson embodies old *Absalom* and Mr. Guy Bates Post appears as *Gabriel*. Miss Thais Lawton is the persecuting old mother, but she does not convey the illusion of advanced age. The only grain of humor in the entire performance is supplied by Mr. William McVay as a bibulous town clerk.

STILL another Because of the need of more rehearsals of Mr. Maurice Maeterlinck's "Sister Beatrice," Mr. John Mason and a special company were called to the New Theatre to produce



Photograph by Byron, New York
Guy Bates Post as *Gabriel*, Ben Johnson as *Abalom* and Mme. Bertha Kalich as *Joan* in The New Theatre's production of "The Witch"

"A Son of the People," a romantic melodrama of the French Revolution which playgoers in other cities will presently see.

The New Theatre's propensity to seek its material abroad is again illustrated by this drama which, in its original version, is "The Revolutionary Wedding," a Danish work by Mr. Sophus Michaelis.

Ernest des Tressailles, a cowardly nobleman and *émigré*, has returned in secret to the Chateau Trionville to wed the companion of his youth, *Alaine de l'Etoile*, the courageous, beautiful daughter of a proud Bourbon family. The bridal feast has not yet begun when a Jacobin rabble, led by *Marc-Arron*, a bloodthirsty Republican, descends upon the house and takes the young aristocrat prisoner. In a trice they try and convict him, according to the arbitrary procedure of the good, old-fashioned melodramatic court martial. He may spend the night with his bride, but with the rising of the next sun will come his summons to death.

Alone with *Alaine*, *Ernest* does not employ his last hours with thoughts of love and patriotism, but abandons himself to paroxysms of cowardly terror. He arouses only disgust in his young bride although, when *Marc-Arron* returns to the room and is fired by a "touch of her icy hand," she consents to give herself for the night to the executioner as the price of her husband's escape. Captive and jailer exchange uniforms and *Ernest* disappears through the door to liberty and safety while *Alaine* prepares to repudiate her promise.

Much to her surprise, *Marc-Arron* will not insist upon her sacrifice. He has given his life for a single night of unalloyed bliss, yet a strange nobility, suddenly developed in his nature, shields the aristocratic lady from his advances. So he settles himself to spend his remaining hours in a chair by the fire and thus *Alaine's* sudden impulse of passionate love for him is inspired.

Well, when the dawn approaches, *Marc-Arron* and *Alaine*

are man and wife in the sight of Heaven, if not by the decree of the Church, and



Photograph by Hall, New York
Miss Katherine Kaelred as *Alaine* in
"A Son of the People"

now it is the Jacobin's turn to be seized with a mad desire to live. But not for long. *Alaine* calms his terror with words of undying devotion and when the



Photograph by Hall, New York
John Mason as *Marc-Arron* and Walter Hale as *des Tressaties*
in "A Son of the People"

guard comes to find their captive flown and their leader a traitor, he is ready for his final exit. *Montaloupe*, the Republican Commissioner, however, is resolved that *Marc-Arron* shall not die. He understands the lure of those velvety, aristocratic lips and is willing to pardon him. "The Republic needs such men as you," he cries, and orders the soldiers to lower their guns.

But *Marc-Arron* is bent upon dying. He will not have it otherwise. He is obsessed by a desire for his own sacrifice. So, when his soldiers refuse to shoot, he dashes to the window and becomes a target for the bullets of the sentries in the court yard below. Thus passes a son of France who gave his honor and his life for one night of bliss. Did ever a greater booby tread the stage? Has ever human ingenuity fashioned a more sublime fool? Can imagination paint a virginal Bourbon daughter of *Alaine's* ilk?

Mr. John Mason's practised art



Photograph by Byron, New York

George Fawcett as *Montaloupe* and John Mason as *Marc Arron*
in "A Son of the People"

does not adjust itself readily to romantic character. Nevertheless, he is the best actor who has yet set foot upon the New Theatre's stage, with the possible exception of Mr. Edward Sothorn. Miss Katherine Kaelred, who impersonates *Alaine*, is overweighted by the extravagant emotions of her part. The only other characters of importance are Mr. Walter Hale as the craven *Ernest* and Mr. George Fawcett as the fierce Republican Commissioner, and these acquit themselves very well.

THANKS to the New Theatre there have been of late so many plays supposed to exert an intellectual appeal, yet really without appeal of any kind, that a melodrama like "Alias Jimmy Valentine," which makes no cerebral pretense whatever but contrives from first to last to be interesting, comes as a real relief. To enjoy properly this exciting drama which Mr. Paul Armstrong has elabor-

ated from O. Henry's short story, "A Retrieved Reputation," you must leave your reasoning apparatus at home, divest yourself of your analytical raiment and sit before it in your bared sympathies.

Jimmy Valentine is a thief! Of such corroded moral material is our hero made. Yet we love him not a whit the less. He is, otherwise, *Lee Randall*, a gentleman who has lived by his wits and the sensitiveness of his finger tips, which enable him to solve the mysteries of the combination locks on bank vault doors without recourse to such boisterous aids as nitro-glycerine or dynamite.

Once, while traveling on an express train, *Jimmy* rescued *Rose Lane*, a beautiful girl, from the unwelcome attentions of one of his ruffianly pals, by throwing the latter through a window. The dying criminal found revenge by unjustly implicating *Jimmy* in a bank robbery.

His previous reputation lent color to the charge and, when the play opens in the warden's office of Sing Sing Prison, he is again a convict doing ten years' time.



Photograph by Mofett Studio, Chicago
H. B. Warner as *Jimmy Valentine*; Harold Hartsell as *Handley*; Miss Laurette Taylor as *Kate Lane*; Miss Sallie Bergman as *Mrs. Moore*; Miss Maude Turner
Goodwin as *Mrs. Weaver* and Frank Kinson as *Kobert Parr*; Koss's circle in "Miss Jimmy Valentine."



Photograph by Moffett Studio, Chicago

Miss Laurette Taylor as *Rose Lane* and H. B. Warner as *Jimmy Valentine* in Paul Armstrong's play "*Alias, Jimmy Valentine*"

A Nemesis almost instantly appears in the form of *Doyle*, a detective, to dog the footsteps of the liberated thief up the steep hill of reformation. *Doyle* knows that *Valentine* was implicated in a desperate bank raid in Springfield, Mass., and is fired with a professional ambition to land him once more behind the bars. He will assure his victim immunity if he will betray his confederates; but *Jimmy* turns a deaf ear to the proposition. Not so deaf is he, a short time later, to the pleading of some of his old cronies, who seek to beguile him with word pictures of the excitement and romance of his old calling. But *Rose Lane's* loyal friendship intervenes again to save him. He resolves to lead an upright life for the sake of the girl who is firm in her belief of his innocence, and three years later—we now have reached the third act—he turns up again, a rising young banker in a Western town, and as deeply rooted in *Rose's* affections as he is in the confidence of his employer, her father.

Jimmy's helping hand, meanwhile, has not been withheld from his pals. "*Red*" *Jocelyn*, his companion on many a midnight raid, is the watchman of the bank. His influence and example have also served to set others among his old confederates on the right path. But there still remains *Doyle*, the detective, who has no faith in reformations and who is resolved that the toll for that famous bank "job" of the earlier days shall be paid.

After a pretty romantic scene in which *Jimmy*—now *Lee Randall*, assistant cashier of the Fourth National Bank—and *Rose* confess the love that has long been in their hearts, the card of *Doyle*, the sleuth, is laid on the young banker's desk. Adjacent to his office a great, new steel vault is being built and around its massive door *Rose's* little brother and sister are at play. Account must be taken of these seemingly trivial details, for it is the children that pave the way to the exciting scene now close at hand.

Doyle is positive of his identification

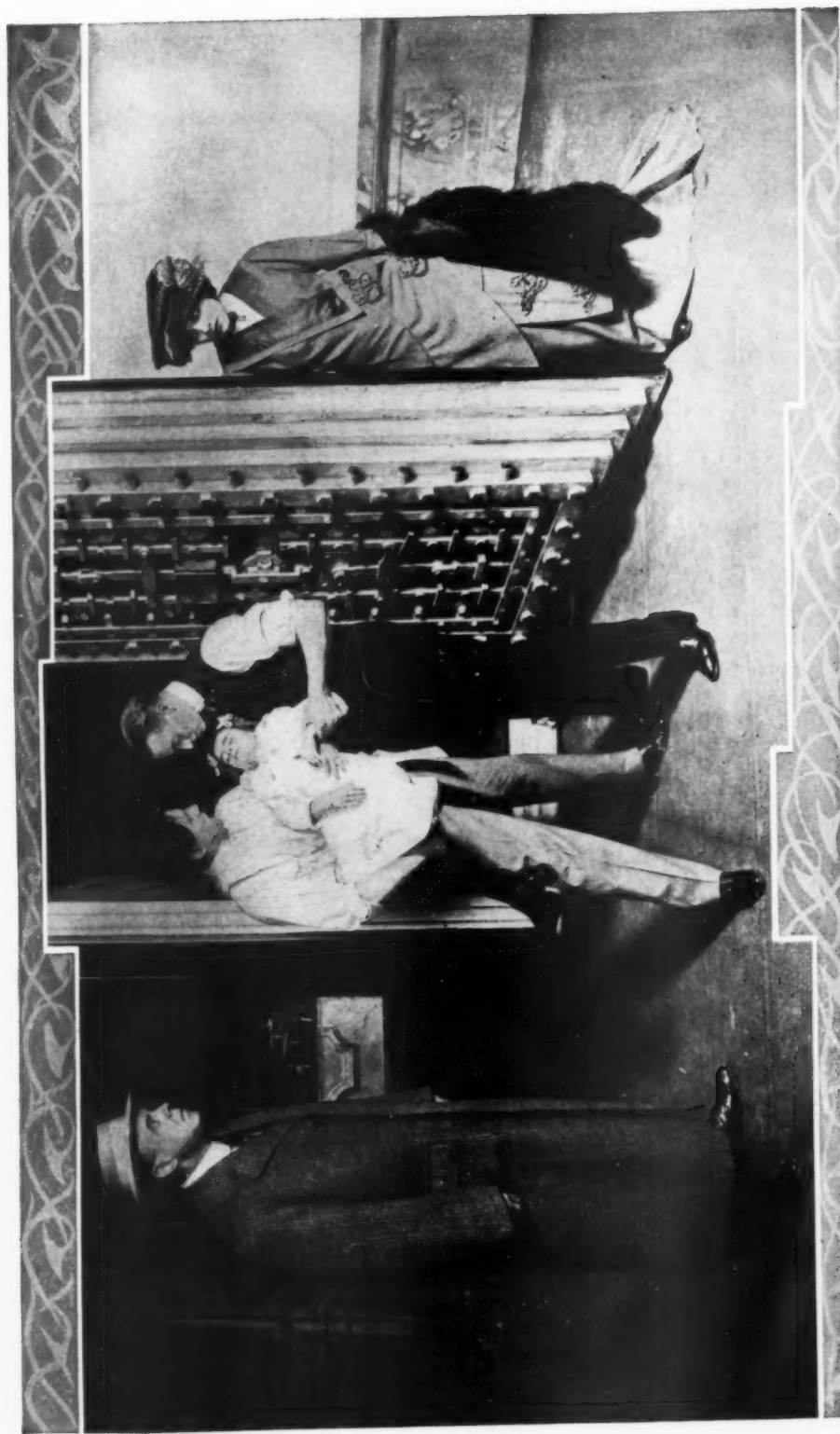


Photograph by Moffett Studio, Chicago

H. B. Warner who achieves stardom in "Alias Jimmy Valentine"

of *Jimmy*. The latter meets his prying questions with splendid *sang-froid*. With easy jocularly and alert wit he establishes a complete legal *alibi*. With the aid of a double negative photograph and a book of newspaper clippings he almost succeeds in convincing *Doyle* that, on the night of the famous robbery for

which *Jimmy Valentine* is wanted, *Lee Randall* was attending a banker's banquet in Minneapolis. The battle of wits between the detective and his intended victim is really admirably written and the audience, which is in the secret of the young cashier's career, is heart and soul with him.



Photograph by White, New York
 Frank Monroe as *Detective Doyle*, Earl Brown as *Red Jackson*, Alma Sedley as *Kitty*, H. B. Warner as *Jimmy Valentine* and Miss Laurette Taylor as *Joe Lane*, in the safe-opening scene in "Alias Jimmy Valentine"



Photograph by Moffett Studio, Chicago

The pals of *Jimmy Valentine* (H. B. Warner) seek to win him back to the old life of crime

One by one the detective's skillful attacks are parried. Slowly and against his will his suspicions are silenced. *Randall*, smiling and confident, is all but victorious when, with a cry of dismay, "*Red*" *Jocelyn*, whom *Doyle* instantly recognizes, rushes in. Little *Bobby* has swung the giant steel door on little *Kitty*—who is suffocating in the air-tight vault!

There is a moment of darkness and the big scene is on. *Jimmy* is on his knees before the door, deftly turning the combination. To sharpen his senses of hearing and touch, "*Red*" *Jocelyn*, as in the old days, has blindfolded him. One by one the tumblers fall under his skillful manipulations. The revolutions of the knob are recorded. To increase the sensitiveness of his fingers, *Jimmy* sandpapers their tips down to the bleeding nerves. The old, vicious life and its excitement are being lived again, but in the cause of mercy. And, as the two men work, stealthily and swiftly, they are silently watched from either side by *Doyle* and *Rose Lane*.

At length the last tumbler falls. The knob catches. The nickel handle turns. Then the steel door swings silently back and *Kitty's* unconscious form topples into *Jimmy's* eager embrace.

Under the circumstances, could a stage

detective be other than divinely magnanimous?

"I think she needs you more than the state of Massachusetts," remarks *Doyle* grimly and leaves the hero in his sweetheart's arms. That's the end of the play. Why, indeed, should there be more? What doubting Thomas is there among us to believe that *Jimmy's* reformation is not complete?

The play is exceedingly well performed. Mr. H. B. Warner, who impersonates *Jimmy*, is in stardom to stay. Mr. Frank Monroe is finely effective as the detective. Miss Laurette Taylor, who possesses much charm of manner, makes *Rose Lane* seem more probable, as a character, than she really is. Mr. Earl Brown, as "*Red*" *Jocelyn*, gives that reformed "yegg" a nook in our sympathies.

IN divers editorial comments—and I have in mind several Western journals—I have noticed that Miss Rachel Crothers' "*A Man's World*" has been pronounced "a great American play." I am not inclined to regard very highly an editorial writer's judgment of a work of art, although I respect his general attitude toward matters of conventional morality. So I would amend these estimates and suggest that "an uncommonly



Photograph by Hall, New York

Miss Mary Mannering, as *Frank Ware* and Miss Helen Ormsbee as *Clara Oaks* in "A Man's World"

good *woman's* play" amply covers Miss Crothers' work.

It is typically and aggressively a woman's argument throughout. Miss Crothers evidently has in mind the injustice of the world's standard which, she believes, places the burden of moral responsibility upon her sex and winks at the sins of men. She believes aright. But she fails to reflect that Nature, not Man, is the inexorable arbiter in the matter of sex responsibility and that, however unjust Nature's dictum may be on purely ethical grounds, she is powerless to change it.

Yet, woman fashion, she will have her say. She will build her plot to fit her own argument and then permit of no retort. Once she allows *Malcom Gas-*

kell to voice his sentiments, but only to give herself opportunity to shatter them. Says *Gaskell*:

"This is a man's world. Man sets the standard for woman. He knows she's better than he is and he demands that she be—and if she isn't, she's got to suffer for it. That's the whole matter in a nutshell."

"*Frank*" *Ware*, the novelist in the play, suffers for the sake of her principles of equal sex morality and thereby Miss Crothers fancies she proves her case. I give her credit, at least, for the courage of her convictions. Having mounted her platform, Miss Crothers will not budge from it, not even for a happy ending of her play.

While traveling in France "*Frank*"



Photograph by Hall, New York

The Studio scene in Act I of "A Man's World." Preparing for the miniature exhibition in Clara Oak's studio



Photograph by Hall, New York
Miss Blanche Ring in the center sings "Louisiana Elizabeth" to prove to the others that she is really "The Yankee Girl," the musical comedy in which she is appearing

adopted a motherless child whose father had abandoned it and, later, when she is living in a bohemian New York apartment house, she lavishes upon it all her devotion. By some of her fellow-boarders, notably a violinist and a journalist, she is loved: others, however, are jealous of her popularity and growing fame as a writer, so the tongue of gossip wags. Meanwhile she refuses to answer all inquiries as to the child's parentage. When the sharp eyes of an opera singer detect a resemblance between "Frank's" devoted friend, *Malcom Gaskell*, and the little boy, gossip changes to scandal and "Frank" is openly accused of wrong relations with her friend.

At first "Frank" ignores the insinuations. Then, on the night when *Gaskell* has declared his love and proposed marriage, she, too, notices the resemblance. Something impels

her to make pointed comments and at length she mentions the child's mother's name. *Gaskell's* agitation confirms what has grown to be a suspicion and presently the whole sordid truth comes out.

Then follows a debate on the subject of sex responsibility. *Malcom* does not cast himself upon her mercy or plead for forgiveness. He assumes the masculine attitude and denies that his past indiscretions make him less eligible to be "Frank's" husband. In fact he upbraids her for wrecking the happiness of two lives for the sake of a prejudice. That marriage will restore him to his respon-



Photograph by Hall, New York

Frederick Paulding as *Oyama*, William Burrass as the *President of Brilliantina* and Miss Blanche Ring disguised as a drummer boy in "The Yankee Girl"



Photograph by Hall, New York

Miss Blanche Ring as *Jessie Gordon* and Charles J. Winninger as *Rudolph* in "The Yankee Girl"

sibility for the child, which he is eager to assume, does not occur to "*Frank*," who dismisses him from her presence.

Miss Mary Mannering in the heroine character greatly benefits the work, for she plays with authority, variety and charm. I have never before seen her so capable. Mr. Charles Richman, as *Gaskell*, is also admirable. If his acting is rigid at times he nevertheless brings manliness and frankness to his rôle. Another exceedingly truthful portrayal is that of a forlorn and disheartened little miniature painter, by Miss Helen Ormsbee. Here is real acting! The violinist by Mr. John Sainpolis and the opera singer by Miss Ruth Boucicault are both good. Little Mark Short appears as the precocious child.

I DID not wax joyous over "The Yankee Girl" although I enjoyed Miss Blanche Ring every moment she was on the stage. Her new musical comedy by Mr. George V. Hobart and Mr. Silvio Hein is a rather dull, conventional affair, neither witty in its lines nor alluring in its music, but it serves at least to bring Miss Ring to the fore and she will probably carry it to success.

There is little need to enumerate the songs for they are subject to constant change. Just now Miss Ring, who impersonates *Jessie Gordon*, the daughter of an American mining Croesus traveling in the West Indies, is singing "Hypnotizing Rag;" "Top O'The Morning;" "Tell it to Sweeny;" "Louisiana Elizabeth," and "Nora Malone."